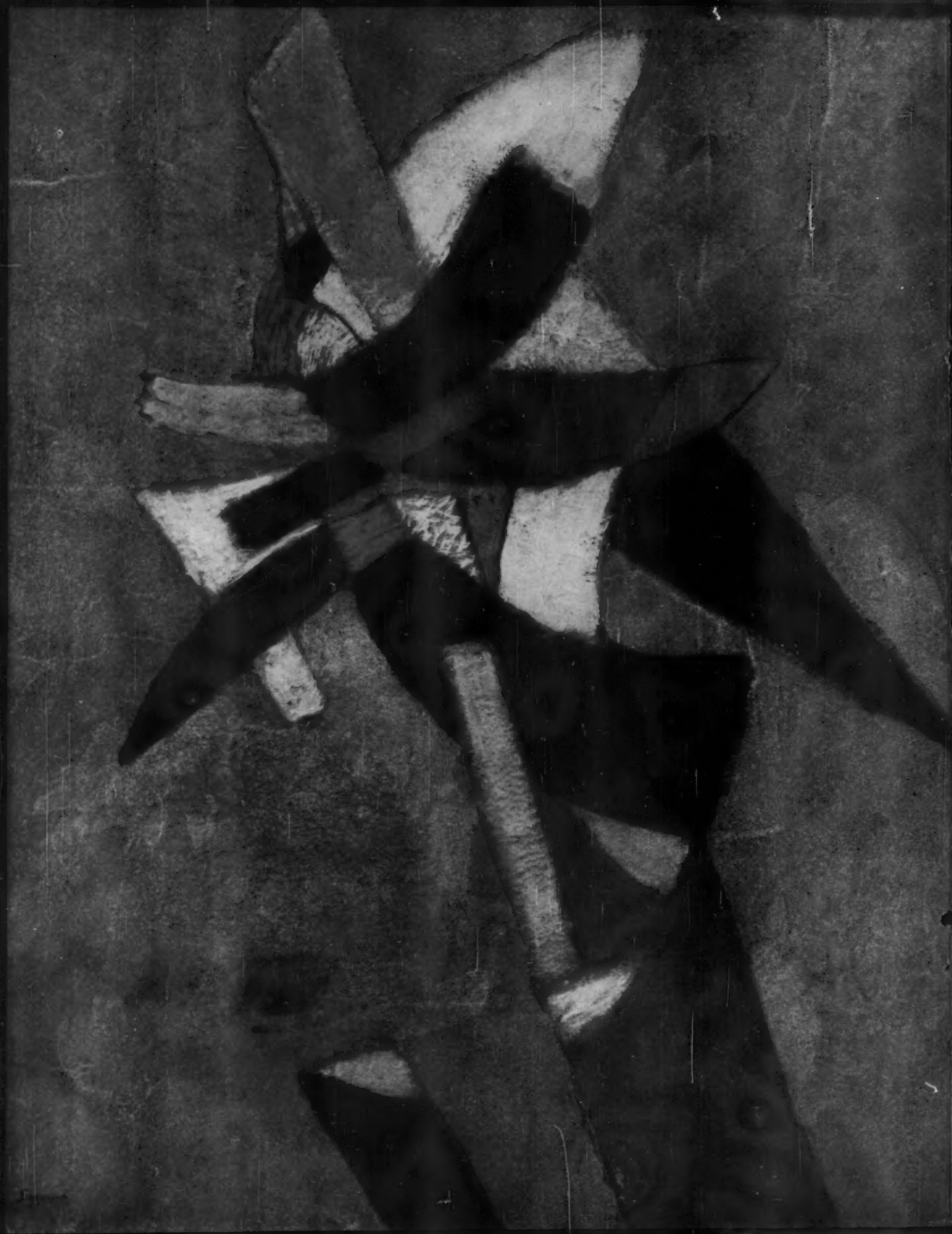


# Américas

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# Américas

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Uruguayan artist Antonio Frasconi at work on a woodcut (see page 7). Photograph by Lawrence Riordan, courtesy United States Information Agency

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## Dear Reader:

On August 15, a meeting will open in Buenos Aires that will have strong repercussions on inter-American relations: the first full-scale OAS economic conference. At a time when Latin America is pushing industrialization in order to raise per capita income, the gathering in Argentina will afford a splendid opportunity for full and frank discussion of matters of prime importance to the OAS member states. This, in turn, will make possible long-range planning. Up to now, the only economic meetings have been the regular and extraordinary sessions of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, and specialized conferences devoted to certain aspects of the broader problem.

The top place on the agenda is given to a general economic agreement, which would amount to a signed commitment for the future. In drawing up a draft for submission to the conference, OAS economists have been combing through resolutions agreed on since 1889 to come up with a realistic instrument based on already established principles. Only thus can it escape the fate of the economic agreement signed at Bogotá in 1948 but never ratified by enough countries to make it effective.

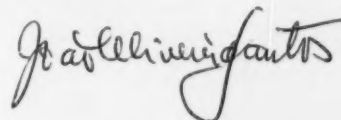
The financing of economic development—from both private and public sources—will also come in for discussion. What funds are needed and in what fields, and how to attract private investment, will be the key questions here. An Inter-American Bank for Economic Development, for which plans have been drafted by a committee of experts from central banks, will probably be proposed to supplement present credit agencies operating in the international field, such as the U.S. Export-Import Bank, the World Bank, and so on.

The third topic is foreign trade, to be considered in two parts: the problems of markets and prices—including such items as relative prices for different products, the disposal of surpluses on the world market, and the like—and measures to promote inter-American trade, such as elimination of trade barriers.

In the search for more flexible and more dynamic technical cooperation programs, the problem will be examined from two angles: first, the Hemisphere's and the individual countries' specific needs (some countries, for example, would like to extend technical cooperation for the first time to transportation); second, a consideration of the OAS Technical Cooperation Program. Created by the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in 1950 and financed by annual contributions totaling about \$1,300,000 from the member countries, this program has given advanced training to more than three thousand Latin American professional men and women in centers scattered around the Hemisphere.

The final item on the agenda is transportation. Special attention will be given to maritime and river transportation, which account for over 90 per cent of inter-American trade. For the first time, an attempt will be made to coordinate the complementary means of transportation—maritime, river, highway, and railway. A smoothly functioning transportation network will, of course, bolster both foreign trade and economic development.

All America will be watching the Buenos Aires Conference. For the success and vigor of Pan Americanism depend on the just participation of all in the economic life of the Hemisphere.



João Oliveira Santos, Deputy Director  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs



# On the economic front

## FOREIGN AID EXAMINED

U.S. military and economic assistance projects all around the world are currently under scrutiny by the Senate's Special Committee on the Foreign Aid Program. Two of ten "on-the-spot" surveys made for the committee deal with operations in OAS member countries. David K. E. Bruce, former Ambassador to Argentina and recently appointed Ambassador to Germany, reported on the programs in South America, which, he pointed out, have often served as models for imitation elsewhere. James Minotto, former Mutual Security Agency Chief in Portugal, covered Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean area.

"Primarily," Ambassador Bruce concludes, "we should depend upon private investment for our contribution to the economic development of the continent, and in this connection the climate for increase in that investment is largely in [the] control of the South American republics, which can do much to improve it. Supplemental investment by the Export-Import Bank should be closely coordinated with that of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the local-currency loans from the proceeds of Public Law 480. Aid should not be extended, when financially dubious, for political effect, or out of expectations of gratitude, or merely to meet foreign competition."

He urges continuance of the technical assistance work and an expanded exchange-of-persons program. While he recognizes the benefits of sales of U.S. agricultural surpluses abroad for local currencies, Mr. Bruce warns of their potential threat to normal trade patterns and to the purchasing countries' ability to pay other debts.

He reports that the United States spent approximately seventy-five million dollars on technical assistance in South America from 1950 through fiscal 1956, and the estimate for the area in fiscal 1957 is about eighteen million. He also summarizes military aid, and activities of the Export-Import and International banks in South America.

Mr. Minotto makes a number of specific recommendations regarding military, technical, and economic aid in the zone he surveyed. He recommends that technical assistance be continued on a country-to-country basis and at present levels; that its financing be placed on a more permanent, predictable basis;

that training of local citizens be stepped up; and that more authority be given the directors of operations missions. In the field of economic aid, he suggests that the present policy of no development loans in the area except to meet emergency conditions should be less stringently enforced. "In most of the countries visited," he points out, "there is a lack of local capital to carry forward basic development programs of a public nature, such as roads, ports, sanitary installations, and health and educational improvements. The absence of such facilities is a deterrent to foreign investors."

Estimated U.S. expenditures for technical assistance and defense support in the Central American and Caribbean area in fiscal 1957 run to almost twenty-five million dollars, but fifteen million of the total represents the special defense-support aid to Guatemala to bolster its economic recovery.

The Special Committee will make its report to the Senate after concluding hearings on these and other surveys.

## POWER FROM THE BACKLANDS

The first major hydroelectric plant in the remote, underdeveloped area of eastern Peru has started providing power to expand zinc production at the Cerro de Pasco Corporation's smelting and refining center in La Oroya. The seventy-two-thousand-kilovolt-ampere installation on the Paucartambo River will also provide extra power for full operation of other plants of the U.S.-owned company in dry years. The sixty-five-mile access road built to the site opens up a semi-tropical region that has been isolated from the populous coastal area by the mountain barrier. The picture shows the diversion dam at Yuncán and its dual-basin sand trap and forebay.





# HOW LABOR IS learning

*Honduran workers help themselves to a better life*

CARLOS GUILLÉN, as told to Kathleen Walker

HALF A CENTURY FROM NOW, Hondurans may look back on the 1950's as a turning point in their history, the years in which the Honduran worker came into his own. From an illiterate nonentity, living in dirt and poverty, he is beginning to emerge as if from a cocoon, to take his place in the community as a human being with a social conscience, with rights and responsibilities, potentially an important consumer as well as an indispensable producer. I say "beginning" advisedly, for the full impact will not be felt for a long time to come, even though the structure of Honduran society is being shaken by the changes unfolding in that small Central American country. Only the future can reveal whether, with its quickened tempo, this evolution will continue as peaceful change.

Not that the development is unnatural or even unexpected; inevitably it accompanies the tidal wave of industrialization that is sweeping through much of Latin America. But it is dramatic when viewed historically.

As recently as three years ago Honduras was the only country in the Western Hemisphere without labor legislation, except for an accident-prevention law passed in 1952. Labor unions were illegal. Anyone making an issue over the workers' lot was automatically suspect and labeled a Communist. The bulk of Honduran workers, some twenty-seven thousand, were hired by two foreign-owned companies in the banana business, producing a crop that accounted for 61 per cent of the value of the nation's exports in 1953. Standard Fruit Company employed twelve thousand workers to turn out coconuts, citrus fruits, soap, and lard, in addition to bananas, in and near La Ceiba, capital of Atlántida Department. Also on the north coast, the country's other big banana producer, the Tela Railroad Company—a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company—operated in La Lima and around San Pedro Sula, capital of Cortés Department.

Ever since U.S. firms acquired their first holdings over fifty years ago, the prosperity of local industry and local merchants had been tied to bananas. Bananas had

given Honduras additional railroad and port facilities, built by the companies. Whatever the Honduran workers knew about cultivation they had learned from the companies, but they had had no guarantees and only whatever protection a benevolent management cared to extend. Over the years, worker resentment smoldered, erupting into fitful strikes during the twenties. The companies, for their part, had provided certain benefits. They had built schools, for example, to insure an education for the children of their employees. But their attitude toward the workers seemed to be motivated by an old-fashioned paternalism. Often it appeared that to the company "employees" meant only the white-collar workers, Honduran or foreign, and not the humble peons. The haciendas on which they were supervised by foremen who considered them little more than tools might be as far as fifty miles from the watchful eyes of the personnel office at company headquarters.

The pressure built up. In May 1954 a general strike,

*One of night schools set up by Standard Fruit Company union in homes of workers to combat illiteracy*



Colombian-born CARLOS GUILLÉN is a specialist in labor education in the PAU Division of Labor and Social Affairs.

which paralyzed production on the north-coast banana plantations, quickly spread to the rest of the country. With the backing of the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT, from its name in Spanish) and the AFL and the CIO in the United States, Honduran workers quickly organized. The Government announced that it would not intervene unless the strike was used for subversive political purposes. The infant unions weeded out pro-Communist elements, and the two-month strike ended without violence when collective contracts fixing wage scales and regulating working hours were signed with the companies.

The strike had a catalytic effect. In the ensuing agreements the unions won recognition. On December 24 a separate Labor Ministry was set up, and the following year the Government adopted a Charter of Social Guarantees. By July 1956 the number of unions had swelled

*Right: General secretary of Standard Fruit union, organized after 1954 strike, chats with banana worker (holding machete)*



*Left: Pío Randaes, highly respected community leader at Finca Birichiche, can neither read nor write*



to twenty. Besides the two strong banana workers' unions on the north coast, these included organized chauffeurs, construction workers, airline employees, and aviation mechanics in Tegucigalpa.

Meanwhile, the OAS Inter-American Economic and Social Council was mapping out a program of workers' education. This was based on the realization that while labor in more industrialized countries had reached the advanced stage of training union leaders, in other nations there was a crying need to teach the workers such elementary skills as reading and writing and the basic facts about nutrition, sanitation, and housing, so that they could achieve a decent standard of living and—just as important—a sense of civic responsibility. But in some

cases, management and labor had yet to be convinced that at this point it was desirable for workers to take the initiative in helping themselves along.

In 1954 the OAS sent out notice to the member governments that it was ready to survey workers' education in the countries desiring it. Honduras was one of six nations requesting the service. Once OAS help had been enlisted, I was sent to Central America to direct our end of the job.

At the time the Labor Ministry had already begun to circulate books, give talks on labor legislation, and even distribute medicines in certain communities. The unions, alarmed at the number of workers who signed their contracts with their thumbprints because they could not write their names, had opened twenty night schools—though inadequately staffed—in the homes of the workers. The Standard Fruit Company had started courses in human relations to enlighten their foremen on their social responsibilities as administrators.

Soon after my arrival in Tegucigalpa, the Labor Minister said to me: "Look, I must confess that we have no workers' education to survey. What we need you for is to help organize a program from scratch so that we can administer workers' education as part of the regular activities of the Labor Ministry." He arranged a preliminary briefing meeting with officials from the Ministry. I learned from them that although Honduras now had a Charter of Social Guarantees, the living conditions of the workers badly needed attention. Two Ministry officials and I flew to the north coast to examine the situation firsthand.

At Standard Fruit headquarters, the general manager, Mr. Bertie R. Hogge, made us welcome and offered transportation to the outlying plantations. Professor Abraham Mejía, the school inspector, representing the company, and two union representatives—Medardo Agurcia, the



*Honduran workers at the conference table: seminar at La Ceiba*

secretary general, and Efraín Irías, secretary of grievances—accompanied us. In five days we covered some sixty miles, visiting most of the plantations and observing living and working conditions.

The workers were eager to register their complaints,



*Rude hut shelters family of four and seven bachelors, with only loose poles as partition*



*Only a few banana workers enjoy housing like this; even some of these have become overcrowded*

which in many cases seemed quite justified. In the absence of government inspection, overcrowding was usual. In one two-room house we found seven single men living in one room and a family of four living in the other. Dependents in most families included not only the wife and children but in-laws on both sides. Part of the housing shortage was due to the labor surplus; drawn by employment opportunities on the banana plantations, people had migrated to the north coast from other parts of the country and from neighboring El Salvador.

In some places without a sewage system, polluted water ran unchecked in open ditches. We saw children playing in the mud with pigs and chickens. Gambling, drunkenness, and prostitution were not uncommon.

Ironically, we discovered that poverty kept many workers from taking advantage of the school services furnished by the companies. Both teachers and parents explained that often there was not enough money at home to pay for clothes and books for the children. And there was no transportation; some children lived about four miles from school and were going without lunch to avoid the long walk home at noon.

Back in Tegucigalpa, we called together representatives of labor and management (both from the north coast and from Tegucigalpa), the Chamber of Commerce, and the binational and international specialized agencies working in health, education, and agriculture. These included SCISP (Inter-American Cooperative Public Health Service); SCIDE (Inter-American Cooperative Education Service); STICA (Inter-American Cooperative Agricultural Service); the UN Food and Agriculture Organization; and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. We decided that in launching a nationwide workers' education program, the best approach would be to tackle the problem in three different regions through three separate workers' education seminars: one in La Ceiba, another in San Pedro Sula, and a third in the capital.

The seminar technique seemed most appropriate for several reasons. Presenting the facts for labor, management, and the Government to mull over would be the simplest way to coordinate the educational efforts of all three. Since the aim of a seminar is to give participants

a chance to air their views and to hear the opinions of others, we felt that the process could obliterate many of the difficulties between labor and management. By splitting the seminar into two working groups, we could keep the meetings small enough for everyone to participate actively. Above all, we had to shape the seminars to the workers' needs. It seemed clear that our ultimate goal should be fundamental education, technical training, and grooming of union leaders. We must also do what we could to impress company foremen with the firms' social responsibility toward the country.

The participants in the seminar were curious but so skeptical that sometimes the going was tough. At first, management was convinced that we were trying to agitate the workers. One company official, who subsequently gave the seminar staunch support, wondered at the beginning whether the seminar was going "to turn the workers against the company." From force of habit the companies believed that any effort to improve the workers' standard of living was leftist and therefore dangerous.

The workers, on the other hand, feared that the Government was trying to make political capital of their



situation. One night there was a knock at the door of my hotel room; it was a worried seminar participant who told me the workers were thinking of walking out on the seminar because they wanted to discuss company contract violations. I got in touch with one of the labor leaders and asked him to explain to the workers that since the contract now was the law, only the courts could discuss interpretations of the law. We were restricted to defining a collective contract in general terms. When the workers understood the technical reasons, they showed up next day on schedule.

Also, it turned out that considerable jealousy prevailed between the workers' night schools and management's human-relations schools, mostly because neither was fully informed of what the other was trying to do. But once the seminar got under way, it was heartening to hear the exchange of ideas. Everyone seemed genuinely interested in finding solutions.

The discussion of worker-employer relations was enlivened by dramatic skits on their grievances presented by the workers. The sketches, which made a deep impression on the company representatives, were so original and well done that a repeat performance was requested for our final session.

During the La Ceiba seminar, which took place from December 12 to 16, 1955, we supplemented the discussions with the showing of documentary films and two field trips. One of these took us to a demonstration farm, where we saw new agricultural-extension techniques being introduced by STICA. Some workers learned on the spot how to vaccinate chickens and picked up other useful information on seed selection. The second trip took us to El Corozal, about eighteen miles outside La Ceiba. This was a community of port workers who had helped each other build their own homes.

A few months after the La Ceiba seminar, investigations were made by experts in housing and public health to render a professional evaluation of living conditions on the north coast. These uncovered several hitherto unknown facts. For example, where the company had built latrines, neither the men nor the children were using them. Everywhere the investigators found people suffering from colds, dysentery, fevers, influenza, malaria, and conjunctivitis. In twenty-four labor communities during the first two months of 1956, forty-three children died of whooping cough and intestinal ailments. The investigators recommended immediate vaccination for adults and children, expansion of medical services, and the launching of a health-education campaign.

Three Regional Labor Education Services were also born of the seminars to inaugurate follow-up programs. In this work, the Honduran Government was able to make use at last of specialists who, a few years before, had been trained in community organization at the fundamental education center at Pátzcuaro, Mexico, sponsored by UNESCO and the OAS.

On March 10, 1956, the first team of five set out. In a continuous series of round tables they met with teachers, labor leaders, management, and workers to discuss all types of problems and their solutions. During the next

few months, the Service team mobilized the community for action, developing programs for teaching people how to set up cooperatives, training shops, small industry, literacy campaigns, and so on. Courses were begun in adult education; the people were instructed in nutrition, health, sanitation. Cooking and sewing courses were established for the women. Even soccer teams were organized.

Unions, management, and the Government were kept fully informed as the program developed. When a shortage of lumber and wiring arose, the companies pitched in with supplies. When the teams needed more chairs for their classes, the people brought them from home. The Standard Fruit Company earmarked \$250,000 for new housing. The life of the workers began to change.

The seminar at San Pedro Sula from January 10 to 14 and the third in Tegucigalpa from June 20 to 24 followed essentially the same pattern as the first at La Ceiba.

Both participants and observers agree that the seminars have started an encouraging trend. Labor leaders preferred to reserve judgment until they could see practical benefits accruing from the seminars. But they were quick to concede their value as a common meeting ground. As one of them wrote in *El Imparcial*, a Tegucigalpa daily: "Thanks to the seminars, we have experimented successfully with joint meetings of management and labor."

One of the company foremen who attended the seminars declared that although there was considerable misunderstanding at first as to the real purpose of the seminar, in the end it "gave us a chance to know just what our people are thinking about. Also, it helped bring home to the workers that they often fell down on the job. The company, for example, had organized sanitation brigades among the workers, but they had failed to keep the communities clean, the drainage flowing, and the disinfectant sprays in use at regular intervals. Finally, the seminar's emphasis on working and living conditions stimulated our housing program."

John T. Fishburn, a labor adviser in the U.S. Department of State, tells me of favorable reports on the seminars received by the Department. Because the labor movement in Honduras is still young, he feels that the non-partisan, educational approach of the OAS is particularly valuable to both labor and management.

The economic officer of the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa sized it up like this: "It seems to me the most telling OAS contribution in Honduras was the way it dramatized labor's role in society. Organized labor had never been a factor there before; the OAS seminars made government, management, and labor realize that here was a newly emerging force with inherent rights and responsibilities."

The Ambassador from Honduras to the United States, Ramón Villeda Morales, said the seminars pointed up the need for a coordinator who could continue the liaison between the government, management, and labor. Then he put his finger squarely on the problem: "Lack of education is at the root of our troubles. The Honduran worker eats poorly—but so does the rich man, because he doesn't know what to eat." ♦ ♦ ♦



Detail of one of Frasconi's many woodcuts of Fulton Fish Market. A Uruguayan, he lives in New York

# the lively art of FRASCONI

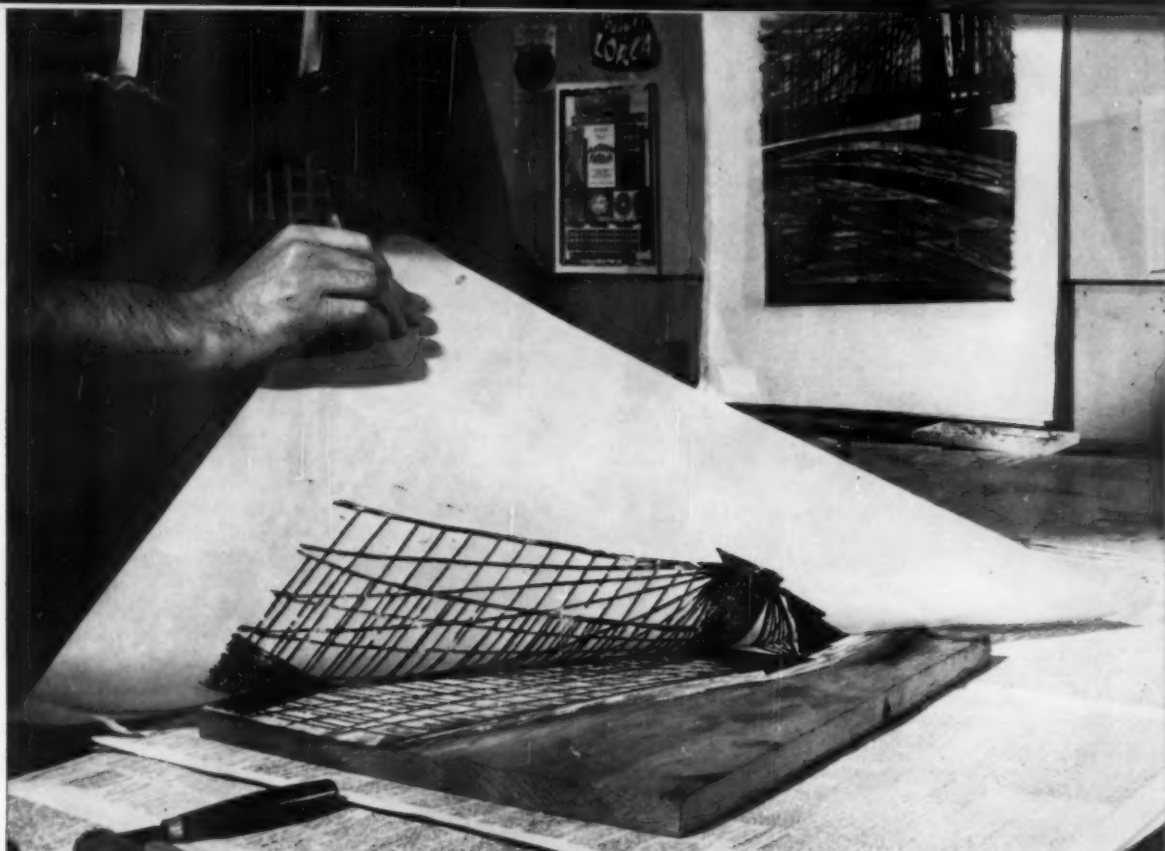
A. SALSAMENDI

GAUGUIN had a low forehead and this never ceased to mortify him. He was a "savage" in a world that upheld formulas, and he seethed with irritated impatience to destroy them; that he did so puts us deeply in his debt. There is another artist, the Uruguayan Antonio Frasconi, who after seeing one of the little-known woodcuts Gauguin made for his beautiful book *Noa-Noa*, was inspired to follow the same path, and with prodigious success.

Frasconi has a high forehead, and I do not suppose this interests him in the slightest. He is a "civilized" being in a world that proudly rejects formulas and takes pleasure in corrupting the few it has inherited; he has not fled from the more or less decadent and snobbish society of his day, as Gauguin did in his, but takes it as it is and lives in the largest and most cosmopolitan of cities, New York, blind to the dazzle of its false gods and deaf to its siren songs.

Frasconi does not fit the literary idea of an artist—he is too open and too well balanced. At thirty-seven, he is extraordinarily mature, with the warmth of Italy and the romanticism of the River Plate. His work has a lyric grace that does not rob it of nobility. He so blends design, color, and form that one wonders, as a *New York Times* critic has said, how he overcomes the limitations of wood-engraving and achieves the delicacy of Oriental painting without losing strength of outline. (Indeed, the New York critics in general, who are not noted for kindness, deal with him in terms of admiration and respect.) He makes enchanting poetry of the Brooklyn docks, the California lettuce fields, the Vermont farmers and their

A. SALSAMENDI, Uruguayan writer now with UNESCO in Paris, has known Frasconi for many years and has followed his artistic evolution from its beginning.



*Frasconi pulls trial proof from inked board. Subject is Brooklyn Bridge, another favorite; in background is a different view*

implements, and blends with it the seriousness of a philosopher and the mischievousness of a small boy. "Surprising, witty, delightful, and at the same time so very forceful" is how Donald Bear, director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, has described his woodcuts.

Such equilibrium is surprising, for few artists today are free of the unsettling influence of our unstable, changing, and revolutionary times. Since 1914, the various generations of artists have reflected the political situation with macabre fidelity. The most recent wars, inflicting unspeakable suffering on humanity, have deepened their anguish and protest. Their works manifest the desperation of those losing faith in man and seeking a solution in death. The individual has been separated from the world around him—more than that, the two have seemed to be mutually repellent forces. It was in this age of conflict that Frasconi began to express himself.

Born in Buenos Aires, he was taken at the age of two weeks to Montevideo, where his family opened a small restaurant overlooking a park. An artificial lake, an equally artificial castle, and an island with weeping willow trees characterized this green space called "Parque Urbano" in those days and "José Enrique Rodó" today. Italians and lovers of beauty, Frasconi's parents could have chosen no other spot in the cityscape of the Uruguayan capital. His father used to cut pictures out of magazines and hang them on the walls; in time, Antonio's woodcuts took their place.

His artistic inclination revealed itself at an early age, and with it an urgent need to achieve the right medium

of expression. He soon turned to wood-engraving. It took him only three weeks to learn the technical rudiments at the Fine Arts Club, but he was years seeking orientation. He did not find it in the admirable lectures of Joaquín Torres García. In explaining why he did not enter the Uruguayan master's studio, he voices the belief that "[Torres García's] constructivist art was a purely geometric-artistic problem that had more in common with the Russians, such as Gabo and Pevsner, and with the Parisian Dutch like Mondrian, than with our own environment." But the theories of his much-discussed compatriot had a lasting influence on him.

At twenty he had his first show of paintings and woodcuts in Montevideo, and from then on he was a regular participant in painting competitions there. In 1945 he came to the United States on a scholarship to the Art Students League in New York, where he studied for a year with Yasuo Kuniyoshi. Before his time was up, he was given a one-man show at the Brooklyn Museum, the country's leading center for graphic art. Then—the first of several visits—he went to California, where the countryside and the field workers reminded him strongly of Uruguay. A scholarship to study fresco at the New School for Social Research brought him back to New York. In 1948 he began teaching at a summer school in Vermont.

At the beginning, Frasconi's work poured out youth's anguish and surprise at the social injustice deplorably apparent in human organization. It followed the directives of the accepted schools of the moment: heavy,



broad lines accentuated the sharp cheekbones of the starving and rimmed in black the eyes begging for bread. Works of this sort—*Homeless* (woodcut, 1944), *Bad Day* (woodcut, 1944), *Beggar* (oil, 1945), another *Beggar* (pen and ink, 1945), *The Dead Child* (pen and ink, 1945), and *Alone* (woodcut, 1946), were among those he exhibited at the New School in November 1947.

Hackneyed as the theme was, all these works undeniably had "something"; whatever it was, it made people stop in front of them, and has done so ever since. If, as *Time* magazine reports, he is one of the "top U.S. woodcut artists in sales," the reason is easy to see: a fundamental honesty, a warm human feeling, immediately comprehensible to the average viewer. It is unusual for a contemporary artist so highly esteemed that his prints are owned by more than thirty museums to be so popular with the public.

The real development of this "something" began with the impact made on him by the United States. The U.S. countryside, tamed by the farm machine, was a revelation to this artist accustomed to rural life that turns men dry and hard and saps their dignity. The fields were gardens, and the independent Vermont farmer was a different sort of man from the field workers of Uruguay and California. Frasconi drew inspiration from the machinery, and noticed that here, far from the misery of the cities, there was plenty of bread and no need to draw heavy lines around angular cheekbones. His works grew more serene and fanciful.

From this landscape he turned to that of New York, with its feverish, insane rhythm, its headlong race for

*The Storm Is Coming* is among Frasconi's most popular woodcuts. A print of it is in Museum of Modern Art, New York



Los caballos negros son  
los herradores son negros.  
Sobre las capas relucen  
manchas de tinta y de cera.  
Tienen, por eso no lloran.  
de plomo las calaveras.  
Con el alma de chusol  
vienen por la carretera.

Juegan y nocturnos.  
por donde animan relucen  
nubes de goma oscura  
y miedos de fina arena.  
Pasan, si quisieran pasar.  
y ocultan en la cabeza  
una vaga astronomía  
de pistolas inconcretas.

Illustration for two poems by García Lorca, part of a series.  
Frasconi did this and Whitman series on Guggenheim fellowships



Cover of catalogue for his Cleveland Museum exhibition shows  
California orchard workers in daylight, lonely tree at night

success. With its oven heat in summer, its bitter cold in winter, its rainy springtime, and its short, pleasant autumn. With its mosaic of peoples and groups of people. Frasconi chose to live on Washington Square, in Greenwich Village, a neighborhood of Italian cafés, strident jazz-filled bars, and open-air chess games that prides itself on having been the bastion of rebels and the center of free verse and love. Superficially it is almost unchanged; of authentic bohemianism little is left. There are mass-produced bohemians and there are glamour girls who, as they parade their poodles, try for artistic

sensibility uncomplicated by poverty or casual hygiene.

From here, a place that for me at least is full of charm, even if only for its past, Frasconi began to absorb New York life from a wholly personal viewpoint. The cafés saw little of him, the art galleries and museums a great deal. His studio began to reflect his personality: it has no walls painted chrome yellow, no peepholes in doors to watch models in the bath; it is a quiet workshop with a charming, balanced disorder, full of life, books, music, primitive pottery, some Japanese paper fish, big work tables flanked by ultramodern chairs and a divan.

Once settled in New York, he spent a long time studying, isolating those aspects of the city that attracted him

the back of a spoon. His technique affords remarkable translucency and permits him to vary his tones subtly wherever he likes. A good example is *The Storm Is Coming* (1950), one of his most successful prints. Under a fiery sky a figure flees from the elements, holding a newspaper over her head as protection from the down-pour, her hair streaming in the wind, a petticoat peeping below a skirt bearing simple and strange designs. This figure, in shades of green, rose, orange, and black, is outlined against a dark, electric background. The surface is cross-hatched, the result of wire mesh embedded in the wood. Often, though not here, Frasconi also uses smaller repeat blocks, which he applies freely like stamps within the main composition.

In the preface he wrote for the catalogue of Frasconi's show in Mexico City in September 1949, David Alfaro Siqueiros said in part: "What are the positive—in a way, exemplary—aspects of this work? A bent for engraving. Engraving, together with the mural, will be the primary form of the 'representative' plastic arts of the future. . . . A bent for a new realism—that is, a modern realism that can only result from a fusion of objective and subjective elements within a single formal realization. . . ." He concluded: "Since his talent is great and his path the right one, the creative result is inevitable."

The Fulton Fish Market woodcuts, *The Storm Is Coming*, and other works no less notable were included in a one-man show that opened in March 1950 at the Weyhe Gallery in New York and later, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, toured the country. There was a poetic allegorical series on the seasons, delightful in its bold play of yellows, violets, and blues (Frasconi gives this last color surprising warmth). Others showed how he had assimilated the U.S. countryside and coasts—particularly those on the farms of the Santa Barbara Valley, in which the bent backs of the laborers combine with the geometry of the fields to produce a mysterious, beautiful whole.

There have been many shows since then, but perhaps the one last spring at the Weyhe Gallery, which included some of these earlier works as well as his latest, most daring conceptions, gives the best idea of his evolution. The Brooklyn docks, rich in browns, oranges, yellows, and greens, are simplified to severe planes that recall Siqueiros' "modern realism," while at the same time a baby carriage or a fleeting view of one of the river-patrol helicopters provides the lyric touch characteristic of Frasconi. There was a trace of what might be nostalgia for distant Uruguay, surrounded by the waters of sea and river: a freshly caught trout with color glinting off its scales; water trapped among rocks; a broad horizon under the rain; a series of five woodcuts on sardine fishermen, the big popular success of the show.

To me, the newest of all was *The Adventurer*, in which a school of little fish is surprised by the feet of a man entering the ocean. The blue and greenish shadows of the water are lit by the colors of sea shells, and no one can see it without having vivid sensory memories.

The show was also a reminder of how Frasconi has broadened the scope of his activities. The gouaches of



*Cheerful Landworker in lettuce fields of California, which reminds Frasconi of his native Uruguay*

most (one of the earliest was the Fulton Fish Market, interpreted at various times of day in a splendid series of large woodcuts in color), and carefully selecting wood, paper, inks, and paints. His favorite wood is unfinished pine, with which he achieves what Jacob Kainen, curator of graphic arts at the Smithsonian Institution, calls "brilliant but unobtrusive use of wood texture," taking advantage of whorls and knots for unusual effects. Sometimes he further enriches the pattern with screening or saw marks. His blocks are large—often as long as forty-five or fifty inches. He prefers oil colors to the heavier printing inks and prints all his woodcuts by hand, transferring the colors from block to paper by pressing with



At Pasture. Prosperity and variety of U.S. farms have inspired many of Frasconi's works

the Pennsylvania coal mines, painted for the magazine *Fortune*, are only one of many such commissions. The limited edition of *Aesop's Fables*, published by the Museum of Modern Art, was there, along with the illustrations of the poetry of Whitman and García Lorca, done on two Guggenheim Fellowships. He has designed book and phonograph-record covers and published portfolios of his prints.

Leslie Judd Portner, art critic of the *Washington Post and Times Herald*, has written: "Frasconi often creates strongly asymmetric compositions, using isolated figures in space in the Oriental manner. As his work matures it relates less directly to German Expressionism, with its crowded composition, and moves increasingly toward the spaciousness and calligraphic line of the Japanese print." It has also been said that he demonstrates a certain tendency toward "the Mexican," whatever that is. On this, he himself comments: "I do not think it exists; if it did, so much the better for me. The only similarity that might be found is in the respect the Mexicans show toward the reality they observe, which I share." He has amplified his opinions on several occasions:

"Man, the landscape, and the machine surround us; in representing them, I think it best not just to reproduce the forms but to show them as they really are, functioning, expressing their capacities—which is where their beauty lies. This beauty should be respected and observed from all angles without formation of judgments on it."

"To represent life we must use colors and planes, but

that is not all; if the *métier* is necessary, just as important is the artist's emotion and social understanding."

"Art has to be a reflection of our life, not merely an expression of our artistic knowledge; the most important thing is that the artist should know himself and know how to use the medium he has chosen."

Some of Frasconi's works share museum space with those of his talented wife, Leona Pierce, whom he met when both were studying under Kuniyoshi. Miss Pierce, whose style is much like her husband's (though I do not believe there is any direct influence between the two), takes as her favorite subject New York children and their difficulties in making a playground of the city streets. She is a silent woman, with a mysterious gift for seeming to vanish into the shadows, but during brief moments of animated conversation her eyes sparkle intensely. The Frasconis have two small children, Pablo and Miguel. The prints and Japanese-style folding books Frasconi has made for Pablo are among his most delightful work. His language primer *See and Say*, with words in Spanish, English, French, and Italian accompanied by appropriate illustrations, which was voted the best children's book of 1955 by the *New York Times* Book Review Committee, was also done originally for Pablo. A portrait of him, full of character, with drawings and designs contributed by the sitter, appeared in Frasconi's 1956 show at the Weyhe Gallery.

More than once, strolling through the Village of an evening, I have seen the lights on in Frasconi's studio and thought how pleasant it would be to invite him out to a café for a couple of hours' conversation in the leisurely Montevideo way. Then I would realize how much the development of his talent has depended on the strict discipline he imposes on himself. So I refrained from interrupting. ♦ ♦ ♦

Frasconi "reads" son Pablo one of folding books he makes for him, while his wife—artist Leona Pierce—readies baby Miguel for walk







*Singers accompanied by typical caja drum set melodic mood of Tucumán Province*

# TUCUMÁN, Garden of the Argentine

**JOSEFINA VALDERRAMA DE ROBINSON**

WHEN YOU HEAR a flourish of guitars and a couplet hiding its gaiety in a lament you will have arrived at Tucumán. Music will accompany you as long as you stay. Singers come in from neighboring Santiago del Estero; guitarists and drummers rally in near-by Salta; from Catamarca drift the echoes of the Calchaquí Valleys and from Jujuy the airs of Humahuaca. For everyone converges on Tucumán to harvest the sweet fruit of the orange trees and the juicy stalks of sugar cane.

Even the speech of this smallest Argentine province is impregnated with music, although diction classes try in vain to erase its singsong quality. The "little song" of Tucumán talk is proverbial, everywhere distinguishable from the "tunes" of the other twenty-one provinces that make up the Argentine Republic. With its slow cadence, the local speech is easy for the foreigner to understand.

MRS. JOSEFINA VALDERRAMA DE ROBINSON, a professor of writing and of Spanish American literature at the University of Tucumán, manages to find time for historical research while bringing up six small children.

Caught fast in an age long past, it stems from the colloquy between Indians and colonizers and rebels at the more recent recommendations of the academicians.

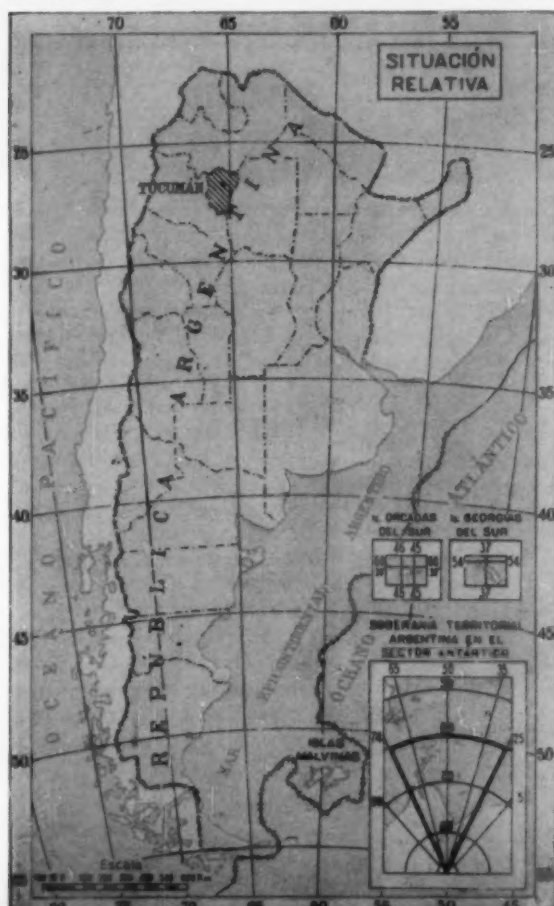
Tucumán Province bears the traces of an indigenous, highly civilized nation that was the center of the Diaguita or Calchaquí culture. The Inca Empire never succeeded in dominating rebellious "Tucumania," a vast region that embraced the present provinces of Salta, Jujuy, Catamarca, Santiago, Córdoba, La Rioja, and Tucumán. Whatever their stage of advancement, we know these people maintained international relations of a sort we consider the fruit of our own civilization. For example, they sent ambassadors to Peru to negotiate a technical-assistance pact with Viracocha, clearly stating the main points of the agreement and calling attention to the fact that it in no way impaired Tucumanian sovereignty.

Today the Pan American Highway from Tucumán city to Salta and Jujuy, through the Humahuaca Ravine along the Rio Grande, and up to Bolivia, roughly follows the route of the old stone "Road of the Incas." Anyone

who travels that way between Bolivia and Buenos Aires will take away unforgettable memories of the "Garden of the Republic," as Sarmiento called Tucumán Province, and samples of its regional products. How can you resist the invitation that appears in both luxury hotels and modest pensions: "Try the sugar pastes, *chancacas* [molasses candy], and *arrope* [candied figs] of La Novia, the original house that has made them since 1890"? Or that advertisement for La Norteña, which besides these sweets sells ponchos, multicolored blankets, and scarfs made of vicuña, llama, alpaca, or lamb's wool? Along the road you are offered with a shy smile the soft homemade cheeses, especially the inimitable Tafi cheese, which is famous in Europe and the delight of gourmets everywhere. Or honey in the comb, with its distinctive local flavor. Or the bread kneaded on the traditional crescent-shaped slabs of wood called *bateas* and cooked in ovens whose shape the birds have imitated for their nests.

Tucumán city, the provincial capital, leans back against the foothills of the legendary Sierra Aconquija, approached by an avenue that continually grows more residential and elegant. Crowned with orange blossoms, adorned with laurel, myrtle, and jacaranda trees whose trunks are embraced by vines, lianas, jasmine, and "queens of the mountain," Tucumán is the nation's sweetheart. While colonial survivals are still noticeable in houses, churches, and narrow streets, a "vertical in-

Map shows location of Tucumán Province (shaded area) in Argentina



vasion" has begun, with many-storied buildings and co-operative apartments sold as "horizontal property." Broad avenues circle the town and new suburban subdivisions overflow the city limits in a vain attempt to house the 210,000 inhabitants. Meanwhile, the center stubbornly resists change, and no one wants to see its venerable memories destroyed. Over here lived Nicolás Avellaneda, writer, orator, President of the republic, and author of the law that created and organized the national universities. Over there is the birthplace of Juan Bautista Alberdi, the brilliant author of *Las Bases y Puntos de Partida para la Organización Nacional* (Bases and Points of Departure for National Organization), who grew more melancholy with the years, finally dying in utter seclusion in Paris, believing himself forgotten, while some



Hotel at San Javier, fashionable summer resort, looks out over rolling countryside

provincial piano was no doubt playing the sweet melodies of his waltzes. That is where Paul Groussac, the French scholar whom Argentina contracted to help organize our educational system, carried on his work. Opposite, Juan B. Terán, founder of the University of Tucumán, was born and studied. On Marcos Paz Street is the school built by Father Roque, a true disciple of St. Francis of Assisi, who for fifty years worked to educate the poor boys of Tucumán. When he died, a little over a year ago, the people who had known him, and those who had studied under him, expressed their gratitude in vows of emulation.

Tucumán city holds an emotional significance for Argentines: there the country's independence was declared on July 9, 1816. Thus we acquired the responsibility for building a nation capable of making human liberty possible within a just and progressive social framework "for us, for our posterity, and for all the men of the world who may wish to inhabit it." We have spent



*Winding mountain roads provide a challenging course for cross-country cyclists*



*Sugar-cane harvest is the climax of Tucumán's agricultural year, draws migrant workers from far afield*

140 years on the effort, and many times eyes tired by long vigil have turned their gaze toward the cradle of our independence.

"The Historic House" is what we in Tucumán call the tiny old building at the center of the city on Congreso Street. There the convention met to proclaim the birth of a new independent sovereignty, four years after the Spanish armies had been expelled northward.

Every year traditional popular festivals, combining religious and patriotic feeling, commemorate the battles of Tucumán and Salta. The Virgin of Mercies is carried in a procession through the town—escorted by school children, soldiers, gauchos on foot or on horseback—to the Campo de las Carreras, where the battle that ended Spanish dominion was fought on September 24, 1812. According to tradition, the Virgin was seen fighting alongside the local citizenry. At any rate, the army of the patriots had begun that memorable day's work by taking communion, and General Manuel Belgrano had entrusted his baton of command to the image that had long been locally venerated. After the people return to the plaza and deposit the holy statues in the Basilica, groups timidly break into dance and song. The dancers

reveal a languid sadness, as if they were betraying an ancient rite. Dancing those *zambas* and singing those *vidalas*, I have realized that our people are reluctant to demonstrate sorrow even in the discreet and exalted confessional of art. Dominated by another people that has failed to restore the sense of security and dignity it once enjoyed, they are haughty and reserved. They cry at night:

*Me voy a los cerros, me voy.  
¡A ver si se apuna el dolor,  
Subo, subo!  
Los ranchos quedaron atrás,  
Las nubes muy cerca están ya.  
¡A ver si se apuna el dolor,  
Subo... subo...!*

*I'm going to the hills, I'm going.  
To see if my sorrow subsides with the altitude,  
I climb, I climb!  
The huts are left behind,  
The clouds are very near.  
To see if my sorrow subsides,  
I climb, I climb!*

In Carnival festivities, by contrast, the people of Tucumán and the northerners in general recapture the





*Tucumán plaza maintains old colonial charm though modern buildings rise near by*

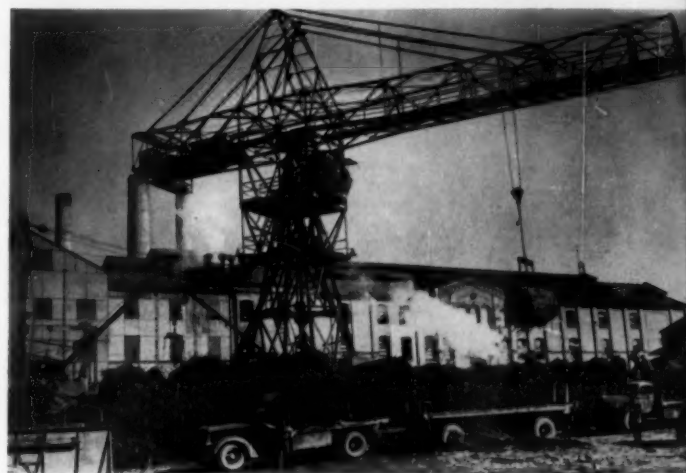
rhythm of a warlike and valiant people. Now the dances and songs are different: the *chacarera*, the *escondito*, and the *carnavalito* are full of action and the joy of triumph.

All kinds of social gatherings, from the so-called "sarao," or evening dance, to noisy street fiestas take place in the northern towns when the hot days of Carnival time come round. Wearing costumes that preserve a colonial flavor in color and workmanship—a gypsy touch in the women's and an archaic style in the men's—the people come from afar, from the hills to the towns. They meet at a house, a store, or a *ramada*, a space shaded by intertwined branches forming a temporary shelter only for the duration of the fiesta. Couples, families, boys, old people arrive at Don Goyo's long-established store in the big shed at Tafi, where both the local people and summer visitors buy their supplies, and where now the Carnival will be welcomed with rituals as old as the hills. It is February, and sun and blood grow fiery. Impatiently one launches his body into the happy movement of the group: the music is a tonic, and the dancers are transformed before the eyes of the onlookers, who occasionally join in. They like to frighten the curious (so timid, they!) with threatening, mocking movements, imitating the Carnival devils. They also like to amaze the musicologists who eagerly collect their songs, penetrating inaccessible fastnesses to reach the singer's home.

Alpachiri, Cochuna, El Portezuelo, Amaicha del Valle, Tafi are places full of poetry and music, with so much natural charm and beautiful scenery that caravans of people from all over the world, hearing of this Arcadian spot in the mountains, cross the country from Buenos Aires to see it for themselves. It is no exaggeration to say that, since the road to Tafi and the Calchaquí Valleys was completed ten years ago, the population of these regions has increased tenfold. Travelers and summer visitors are captivated by the brilliant days, the infinite skies, a new blue or a darker green at every turn of the road through the groves, mountain torrents roaring over precipices, gentle falls of pure spring water. Those who can, build homes in the valley and plant their nursery of

violets, strawberries, spikenards, mazard trees, and apple trees; then the vegetable and flower gardens, in which cultivated plants are mixed with native varieties. By now nothing can tear the newcomer away. Hundreds of summer villas in the most diverse architectural styles—colonial, modern, Californian, or Basque—dot the landscape, and in the shade of willow trees you see the modest huts of the local people.

Even before the building of the road, which brings the Valleys within two and a half hours of the city of Tucumán, it was common to take people to see them if they could stand the eight-hour trip by horseback. By that route came the Spanish philosopher Manuel García Morente, then a professor at the University of Tucumán, who compared these scenes with those of Switzerland. Then there were painters like Osorio Luque, with his *Procession in the Hills* or his "portraits" of local people,



*Unloading the sugar cane for processing at Concepción mill near Tucumán city*

which can only be compared with those by the magnificent Gómez Cornet. There were poets like Capdevila, Ricardo Rojas, and Jorge Luis Borges. Borges' fame as the best Argentine poet preceded him to Tucumán, and he returned to Buenos Aires toying with the idea of writing a metaphysical short story that, like the poetic "*Fervor de Buenos Aires*," would reflect the fervor that the geography and history of the North arouse in southerners.

Tucumán Province boasts the richest hydrographic network in the country. A dozen powerful rivers descend from west to east, like the lines of a graph denoting the area's agricultural wealth. Two large, modern dams, at Cadillal and Escaba, are newly completed and ready to enrich the province's now precarious electricity supply. Works begun more than ten years ago and paralyzed during the lean years of the dictatorship are once again under way.

The Tucumán economy is based primarily on agriculture: citrus fruits, soft woods, vegetables, cotton. While to the north grain grows without danger of drought, to the south the proximity of the salt flats of Santiago and

Córdoba leaves an area suitable for grazing goats. When warm, moist winds from the east hit the Aconquija Sierra, they form a dense mass of clouds that continually precipitate rain from September to March. Gradually the showers diminish and during the winter the atmosphere is dry and diaphanous.

Then it is time for the sugar harvest. Thirty mills scattered throughout the province receive the cane grown on a million acres. Workers from neighboring provinces flock to Tucumán to help with the arduous cutting. Sometimes women and children pitch in. The cold and the sharp leaves cut the workers' hands, but no matter; the wages are good and time presses. Rural school-teachers find empty benches, for the children are in the fields. Over this period, the child's writing loses its precision, but his arithmetic, thanks to his practice in count-

him on condition that he help out at branding or round-up time.

The city people also flee the summers. Vacationers scale the hills: they go to Las Estancias, reputed to have the best climate in the world and indisputably possessing matchless scenery; to the foot of Clavillo Mountain, on the Catamarca border; to the villages of La Viña, La Merced, El Mollar, or Tafi. The wealthy enjoy the lower flanks of the Aconquija Sierra: the San Javier chain and Villa Nogués, less than an hour from the city and a center of elegance, with a hundred houses perched on individual little hills, with parks, gardens, swimming pools, tennis courts, and flower-bordered roads and paths.

Wherever he goes, the city dweller meets the farmer who only a little while before had been visiting town. The visit is repaid and the conversation renewed. Brother is never far from brother. They imitate each other and understand each other. There is something rural in the streets of Tucumán, in the deliberateness and provincial dignity of its people, in the shapes of its houses, in its woods, in its simplicity. There is something seignorial and urbane in the humblest people of the valleys and their way of receiving the visitor, of offering their hospitality—their roof, their fruit, their glass of well water or fresh milk. Nowadays the young men and girls dress like the natives: a poncho seals out bad weather, leather guard flaps protect the riders from brush and spines. They gallop flank to flank and drive the cattle.

I remember a conversation I once overheard:

"Where did you find my watch, Conrado?"

"Near Don Sosa's pasture, boy."

"Was it running when you found it?"

"No. It was lying down."

Conrado is the son of a ranch laborer, so poor that he has no watch; he tells time by the sun or by the animals' comings and goings. But he has health and strength that fill him with happiness and pride. His whole family is that way: strong, generous, valiant. They like to tell of the prowess they display in winter, when a lamb is lost in the woods and they must rescue it from the frozen ditch, while cold and icicles cut their faces.

They offer their homemade cheese in such natural abundance that southerners call them squanderers. They squander everything: the money they earn in the harvest; time, which they enjoy spending in idleness as well as in work; wine, which they serve with excessive prodigality; friendship, which sometimes is not appreciated and is transformed into silence or vengeance. Poets and musicians, potters, weavers, intuitive philosophers, sometimes wise men—they are all of these. The folklorists and musicologists Alfonso Carrizo and Isabel Aretz demonstrate that in their respective collections *Cancionero Popular de Tucumán* and *Música Tradicional Argentina*. People return to the city with their spirits strengthened, having unconsciously absorbed the traditional virtues.

The women of the North are famous for their bravery and patriotism. While they give ample proof of valor in their daily life, history reflects it even more. During the years of war against the armies of the Spanish General Pío Tristán in the North, the women of Jujuy resolved



*Tucumán city, lively commercial center, is spreading out to accommodate growing population*

ing the stalks of cane he has cut, maintains an acceptable level. And that adult vocabulary! The school tries to give the child a world of his own, related to his environment and his life, but urging him toward higher levels. It carries on its daily battle while the orange trees bloom and the canefields shine green in the sunlight.

The migrant population goes and comes with the seasons. From west to east the Tucumán Province workers approach urban areas that put them in contact with "the city" and its reputed charms. Since it is the season of harvest and abundance, they enjoy shopping and seeing the town. On Sundays and holidays they lodge in hotels or taverns, exploring the streets and plazas. Finally the summer heat makes the itinerant worker nostalgic for his valley or mountain, or even his little suburban farm. Since there is no more work in the sugar mills or on the plantations, he goes away, carrying his meager possessions and his humble family in a cart, wagon, or truck. During the rest of the year, the workman is a farmer or cattle hand. He lives in his adobe-and-straw hut on the plot of land the ranch owner has rented to him or lent

to evacuate the city rather than fall under the Spanish yoke once again. This was the origin of the "exodus from Jujuy," under the protection of the army of Belgrano, to the invincible city of Tucumán. Later they performed heroically as nurses and auxiliaries to the militia. They encouraged their sons to resist every tyranny. When the "Martyr of Metán," Marco Avellaneda, fell in the fight against Rosas in 1842, a woman, Fortunata García, rescued his head from the public pillory where it was displayed in the central plaza and gave him Christian burial.

Amalia, the heroine of José Mármol's novel of the same name, was from Tucumán. Probably she was drawn from life. An article in *La Nación* of Buenos Aires last year pointed out that an aunt of the poet, María Mármol de Terrada, fits the biography of the protagonist. Like Amalia Sáenz de Olabarrieta in the story, she was the widow of a soldier of the independence wars and the owner of a house in Barracas, where she found refuge in the tragic days of 1839. The only thing Mármol changed was the heroine's home town.

To read the description of nature in that novel is to enter the realm of romanticism. Tucumán is a tropical land, exotically perfumed. Polished, languid living. Boundless time. Like his master, Hippolyte Taine, Mármol finds close connections between character and climate. The people of Tucumán, particularly Amalia, seem to be dreamers who only enjoy life. But no: Amalia is not only capable of heroism, she is the epitome of it. A human being full of determination and ready to fight for liberty. Suspense and drama build up as, for love of the cause, she becomes enmeshed in the political struggles of her day and meets her death.

The novel is required reading in our secondary schools. Just as significant are the pages Domingo Faustino Sarmiento devoted to these regions, a eulogy of the city bordering the orange groves, the city "whose gardens exhale suave aromas of jasmine and honeysuckle."

Tucumán also takes pride in its pragmatic side. It wants more factories. It is experimenting with making paper from the bagasse from sugar cane. It seeks capital and offers labor. It demands electricity for the farms. It does not want to cram the city with unnecessary inhabi-

tants, but neither can it live without progress. The University was born in 1914 of the desire to give the men of the northwest a place to do research, to learn, to apply their knowledge. So far it has done more in the first two fields than in the third. While the University itself has developed at every level until it now brings together all scientific and humanistic disciplines, the community has not grown enough for technical applications. The schools have had fine teachers; some have given the best possible lesson: that of an exemplary life. But Tucumán has not progressed at the rate the teachers hoped for. Until 1946, we had the best school of architecture in South America; yet we have only a dozen outstanding buildings, and only five are important public structures. Our technicians win competitions in the United States, but they do not find professional opportunities in their own land. But we have faith, and now we are enlarging our university, planning a model campus on forty-four thousand acres in the Sierras of San Javier, four miles west of town.

The Miguel Lillo Museum of Natural History, named for a great Tucumán botanist, publishes the most complete and de luxe journal of its kind, *Genera Plantarum*. We have professors from the leading scientific centers of America; we have geographers, historians, physicists from all over the world. Of course, social and industrial conditions do not depend exclusively on the University. Gino Germani showed in his *Estructura Social de la Argentina* that Argentina is a country ready for progress. Free of racial problems, with the highest literacy rate in Latin America, it is living as if on the eve of a renaissance.

As the bus or car leaves Tucumán and you look back in farewell, you will hear unexpectedly frank laughter celebrating who knows what aspect of your appearance or your conversation. The *tucumano* loves to laugh. He has a sense of irony that no one can take away from him. The conquistadors heard him laugh, and they laughed with him. And while the missionary St. Francis Solano, at the end of the sixteenth century, soothed the anger of the inhabitants of these regions, his music was mixed forever with that other music that has never ceased. ♦ ♦ ♦

*Sparkling rivers brighten rural scene, provide refreshment for loyal mounts at day's end*





# The natives are friendly

A BRAZILIAN IN THE U. S. A.

ARMANDO S. PIRES, illustrations by RALPH ROBINSON

"WHY DO YOU LIKE living in the United States?" my sister asked me some years ago. "Seems to me, from what you tell us, that things are pretty much the same up there as they are here. You've never been rich, but you haven't been poor either. Up there, with all that famous standard of living, what have you got that you didn't have right here—that makes up for the obvious disadvantages of living away from your charming family?"

I hesitated. "Well, for one thing, you don't have to put glue on postage stamps. You just lick them, and—"

She was eyeing me strangely. *Here it is*, I could imagine her thinking. *Our parents were first cousins, and they say that sooner or later—*

"You know," I insisted. "Things like that. Hot water right from the faucet, no gas heaters in bathrooms like here. And everywhere you go, a telephone. And coins are of uniform size, so they always fit the slots. And everything's so easy and convenient. There are little machines for everything you can think of. It's—well, sort of 'civilized.'"

"'Civilized,'" she repeated slowly. "'Convenient.' You don't glue stamps, you lick them. That's all. You're surrounded by little machines that shave you and take you places and help you cook faster. You're surrounded by civilization. I see. Yes. And that's all you've ever wanted out of life, isn't it? Easy to please, aren't you?"

I remembered a previous engagement, and left in a hurry. I felt sticky all over from her sarcasm. And I've been thinking about it ever since. Perhaps I have the answer for her now. The reason I, a Brazilian, enjoy living in the United States is probably to be found not so much in superficial differences between the two countries as in the general similarity. I can't say I like everything here, but then the citizens don't either. Although

officially classified as an alien, I have never *felt* like one. Knowing the language beforehand helped, to be sure. But mostly it's the similarity of many customs, traditions, and attitudes. Generalizations are dangerous, of course, but let me go ahead and make a few.

Take our leaders, for instance. In both the United States and Brazil, who cares if a candidate's grandfather dug graves in the Ukraine or his uncle sheared sheep in Switzerland? Fellow's a native? Solid family man? Honest, and all that? Says he'll lower taxes and raise salaries? Actually *wants* to be President? All right, let's vote for him.

Then, as soon as he's in office, everybody starts criticizing the poor man. Ridiculing politicians is a national pastime in both countries. As a matter of fact, "nothing sacred" is just about the rule.

There are, of course, minor differences. For example, a Brazilian politician would let it be known through the newspapers that he's an honest man and prove it with figures, facts, and so on; but he would be unlikely to show off his wife and family to the people so everybody will know he's a "regular guy." A U.S. politician, on the other hand, might proudly display spouse and offspring but never allow himself to be photographed in pajamas. In Brazil, middle-class men often look upon pajamas as the ideal thing to wear around the house in the evening or on week ends. There may be a certain logic to the argument that nobody cares if these get wrinkled, although to me pajamas outside one's own room have always seemed a symbol of sickness, like tea with lemon or going to bed with Rudyard Kipling and pink lozenges.

When dissatisfied with the way the government is doing its job, U.S. people don't plot revolutions, they join civic committees to "improve the community." The

"... Mostly it's the similarity of many customs, traditions, and attitudes."





*"They'd rather park illegally, pay a fine, or go to jail than leave their car two blocks away and walk. . . ."*

word "community" means a lot in a country where group activities are much more prevalent than in Brazil, which is a country of soloists but few orchestras and choral groups. Those in the United States who think of themselves as "individualists" ought to take a good hard look at Brazil and then feel terribly collective for the rest of their lives. Teamwork has helped make the United States a great power. In Brazil it might sometimes have the opposite effect, because people of real or imagined brains would soon pull away in their own directions, disrupt the team, and do something quite remarkable for the country all by themselves, just to prove their point, whereas if they were forced to stick together they might grow morose and hold back the team.

Americans are considered more disciplined than Brazilians, and perhaps this is true. On the other hand, while North Americans shove and push and trample each other to get on trains and buses, Brazilians will line up sheepishly like so many Britishers. I remember my father's saying that a waiting line is the best everyday example of "natural law"—that is, the instinctive human need for law and order regardless of whether they are enforced, in circumstances where their absence would mean chaos. Another, and gloomy, example is the bread lines of depression days. Why do people shove each other in the United States today? Probably because deep down they feel it's outrageous to be taking a bus in the first place; they'd have driven to work if they could have found a place to park. Shoving is a way of saying to the next fellow, "Why didn't you drive today?"

This parking business brings to mind the question of U.S. laziness. If you think North Americans are a vigorous people who love to exert themselves physically, are not afraid of work no matter how hard, just watch the natives in the business center of any U.S. town. They'd rather park illegally, pay a fine, or go to jail than leave their cars two blocks away and walk to their destination. And those machines my sister sneered at—why, there's

one for almost every function you can think of, the idea being not only to replace expensive manpower but to get at things faster and more easily. Put a coin in a slot, press the right button, and you can be served anything from a cup of coffee (choice of black, with cream, or with cream and sugar) to a pair of nylon stockings. You can do without these gadgets, of course; but you wouldn't want to, even—or especially—if you're a Brazilian, for Brazilians also love machines and, given half a chance, are capable of the kind of ingenuity that North Americans are so proud of. (During the Second World War, for example, when gasoline was hard to get, a lot of Brazilian car-owners attached a charcoal-burning device to the rear of their cars; as for do-it-yourself, when dollars were scarce and the Brazilian Government banned many imports, manufacturers promptly and miraculously began putting out food mixers, radio-phonographs, and so on).

When we speak of a "minority" in Brazil, we seldom think of the anthropological connotation of the word, but in the United States this seems to be its primary meaning. One is much more conscious of racial, religious, and national differences here than in Brazil. Possibly, as one North American explained to me, because when the United States was wide open to immigrants, they came in great national groups and settled together in isolated colonies with their own traditions and customs, while in Brazil the immigrant groups, being smaller, were assimilated more easily. Be that as it may, Brazilians never refer to one another as "Portuguese" or "Italian" or "French" on the basis of remote ancestry. You'll seldom hear a Brazilian say, as North Americans so often do, "That's a Swedish name," or "He's got the map of Ireland on his face."

Before I was aware of this U.S. habit, I once caused a certain young lady some confusion. "How do you spell your name?" she asked.

"P-i-r-e-s," I answered.

"What kind of name is that?"

"Portuguese."

"Oh, are you Portuguese?"

"No."

"But didn't you say the name was Portuguese?"

"Yes."

"That's what I mean. You *are* Portuguese, then."

"No, I'm Brazilian."

"Well, isn't that the same thing?"

"No."

"Oh, Brazil was—it was settled by the Sp-Spanish, wasn't it?" she went on, uncertainly.

"No, by the Portuguese."

I think that's when she began to cry and laugh at the same time, and I left silently, scratching the back of my head with my umbrella.

Talk about spelling names! North Americans have a fetish about spelling. Every time you must give your name—at an immigration office, a shop, over the telephone—you will be asked to spell it, even if it happens to be, say, Cooper, or Smith. It might be "Cowper," you see, or "Schmidt." If your name is, say, Costa, you must never say simply "C-o-s-t-a" but "C as in *cow*, O as in *oyster*, S as in *sugar*, T as in *trigonometry*, A as in *Albert*." Sometimes it's hard to remember a familiar word beginning with a given letter, and that's how you come up with *trigonometry* instead of *three*. Of course, professional telephone operators have their own series of "alphabet" words (T as in Thomas), but you must develop your own. Once a young Brazilian named Bogen, who spoke little English, asked me to put through a long-distance call for him. In spelling his name to the operator, I couldn't think of a single word beginning with *b*. I stumbled, hemmed, hawed, finally remembered one, and triumphantly recited: "B as in *Boston*, o-s-t-o-n." When the bill came at the end of the month, it was addressed, naturally, to Mr. Boston.

People outside the United States often accuse North Americans of being money-crazy. That's unfair. Sure they like their dollars—but don't we all? On the other hand, they know how to reward people for their work. When I was a young student in Ohio and the only Brazilian on the campus, I was often asked to speak to groups about my country. The audiences were always

attentive, they asked intelligent questions, and they invariably paid me a fee, however modest. One time the chairman (a civic-minded lady of wealth in the town) came up after the lecture, discreetly handed me an envelope, and said: "Oh, I enjoyed you so much! We always like to have foreign students speak to our little groups. You're all so interesting. Besides," she giggled, "you're less expensive than Mrs. Roosevelt."

Years ago, when I was trying to earn a living by freelance translation work, an appliance-manufacturing firm hired me to put into Portuguese a booklet of instructions for one of their products. I did not know how much to charge, and an experienced translator told me at least three cents a word. After the job was done, I counted three thousand words, thought if I charged ninety dollars they'd never send me more work, cut my rate to two cents, and sent a bill for sixty dollars. A few days later they wrote to me, returning my bill and asking me to "forgive" them for "taking this liberty," but my job was worth more to them, and they suggested I make out another statement for "at least seventy-five dollars."

Another surprise in store for aliens in this country—at least for Brazilians—is that measurements and other conventional symbols are part of everyday speech and lore. In Brazil, if you ask how far one city is from another, you will probably be told, "Oh, about four hours by train," but here they will give it to you in miles. Since we're taught kilometers to begin with, and aren't used to thinking of distances even in the decimal system, we all have a hard time getting adjusted. Some of us—myself included—never do. Whenever I hear "miles," "feet," "yards," and so on, I must force my brain to grind slowly on the tough meat of mathematical calculations and come up with finely minced bits of elementary arithmetic.

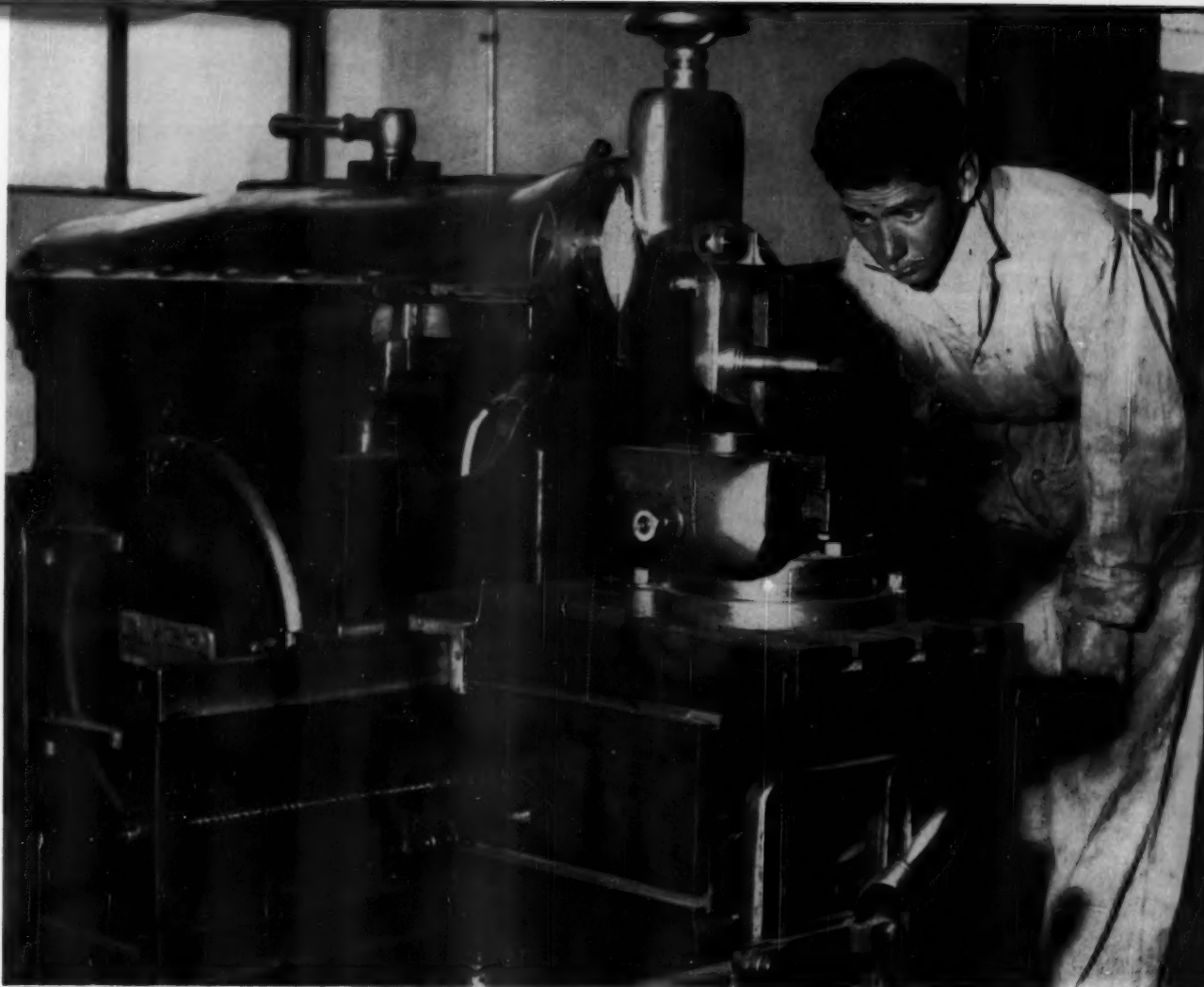
North Americans are equipped at birth with a compass attached somehow to the recesses of their brains, so they can tell you without perceptible hesitation where east, west, north, and south are. In Brazil we'd be inclined to say, "Oh, it's about a two-hour drive thataway," but here they say, "It's fifty miles northeast of here." Once, when I was a newcomer to New York, I was supposed to visit a friend on West Eighty-fourth Street, which was reached, he told me, by taking the Broadway subway to Eighty-sixth Street, there being no stop at Eighty-fourth. When I emerged from the dungeons into a bitterly windy and pitch-black night, with not a star in sight, I hadn't the faintest idea how to find Eighty-fourth. So I approached a little old man all huddled up in a news kiosk and asked him, "Which way to Eighty-fourth Street, please?" After the first moment of astonishment at my stupidity, he informed me, "Two blocks south of here, of course. This is Eighty-sixth, ain't it?"

When it comes to a showdown, I can't really tell my sister, or anyone else, why I stay on here. I *can* remind her, however, that I'm still a Brazilian citizen and much prefer black beans to Boston-baked. Straddling two nationalities is a fascinating experience, and if it keeps up much longer, my mind will be immeasurably enriched—or altogether lost. ♦ ♦ ♦



"Two blocks south of here, of course. This is Eighty-sixth, ain't it?"





*Student at Pedro Domingo Murillo Industrial School in La Paz works with metal-shaper*

# BOLIVIA'S INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

JUAN PEREIRA

"WHILE THE POLITICIANS debate Bolivia's economic problems in learned words," remarked a La Paz housewife, "I'd say that what this country needs is to make some egg beaters. I've trudged up hill and down looking for one."

Her oversimplification, however facetious, spotlights the basic weakness in our economic structure. Bolivia is just now shaking off its traditional bondage to the sale of metal ores as a means of livelihood. For too long we have depended on tin to permit us to import egg beaters,

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coffeepots, light bulbs, wrenches, shovels, furniture, and a long list of articles for daily living.

Metals and oil earn a cash income, but to round out its economy Bolivia needs higher agricultural production and more consumer goods. This is where the teachers of industrial education come in. For one big handicap to industrialization is the lack of skilled manpower. Bolivia's 3,166,000 people are predominantly rural, and well over half are Indians who have been welcomed into the national economy only in recent years. No nation today can keep up with the world when large numbers of its citizens are equipped to earn only a subsistence-level living.

As Humberto Capriles, general manager of the Na-

tional Association of Manufacturers, put it: "Bolivia is a country that is still not industrially developed. We have great expectations for the growth of industry and the consequent progress of our country, once we can depend on having the needed workers. Our association has suggested to the Government the establishment of schools for training industrial workers as a first step. Perhaps the best indication of our belief in industrial education is the fact that the manufacturing industries pay a 2½-per-cent tax on their earnings to help support the trade schools. Heretofore, we have trained our own workers in our factories, but for real development we must have a continuous stream of skilled workers entering industry."

The Government's answer is the Pedro Domingo Murillo National Industrial School, opened in La Paz in 1942, and regional units attached to high schools in the capitals of all nine departments and in two provinces. Actually, these schools and the factory system are growing up together, and we are shaping the one so that it will help the other.

Mining is still Bolivia's biggest industry, but during the past ten years we have been building manufacturing industries. Textiles of wool, silk, and cotton are the leading manufactured product—quite properly, in a country with a long tradition of fine woven goods. The trouble is that the supply runs far short of the demand, and the eager shopper arriving for another yard of flowered drapery material is likely to find that all the bolts on display a few days before have been sold. As yet we have no garment industry, but La Paz does have a hat factory to manufacture the saucy little semiderby worn by the Indian women in this area.

Food processing is a leading industry. This includes manufacture of beverages—mineral water; soft drinks of papaya, oranges, lemons; and Bolivian beers, which some visitors consider the best in South America. A glass factory in La Paz makes all the beer bottles and a large part of the other bottles we use.

Cochabamba, Bolivia's second city, with a population of eighty thousand, is becoming noted as a canning center and its pineapple, apple sauce, grapefruit juice, peas, and so on move quickly from the grocery shelves. The canneries cannot begin to supply our needs, however, and imported canned goods command painfully high prices.

In recent years we have manufactured a variety of small articles, such as rubber gloves, hot-water bottles, biscuit cutters, aluminum ware and other kitchen equipment, cheese presses and other small farm apparatus, plastic coat hangers, plastic dishes and toys, and table glassware. The growing leather industry has added shoes, traveling bags, and pocketbooks to the list.

There are sugar refineries in Santa Cruz, and there will be more with the promotion of agriculture in that region. Cochabamba and Sucre have the largest oil refineries, and a pipeline from Cochabamba scales the hump of the Eastern Cordillera to Oruro and La Paz. A pipeline to Arica, Chile, on the Pacific coast, is still in the planning stage; meanwhile oil is exported by pipeline and in drums to Argentina and Paraguay.



*Instructors introduced crib system to keep much-used tools and safety equipment in order*

Foreigners visiting tropical Santa Cruz are always amused to learn that the big wheels on the oxcarts are made of mahogany, but it is no laughing matter. Bolivia has fantastic resources in this and other woods but is not exploiting them, partly for lack of the artisans needed for a cabinetmaking industry. The modern furniture in the smart new Copacabana Hotel in La Paz was made in local factories—something that ten years ago would probably have been impossible. A small amount of good furniture is also made in Cochabamba and Tarija. The Yungas valleys, seven thousand feet lower than La Paz, have the forests to supply a manufacturing industry, and the people there are anxious for technical help in getting started. But at present the lumber is trucked over a long winding mountain road to La Paz, and furniture returns the same way.

Bolivia's whole economy is, in fact, split, like the land itself, by the Andean Cordilleras, which extend from north to south the length of the country and create regions so distinct that our population was long divided into isolated culture groups. We need a network of good highways to unite the country—the altiplano, the great plain between the ranges, where more than half our people live; the high valleys that break the Eastern Cordillera; the extensive eastern lowlands, which we hope to convert into a national breadbasket that will end our need for importing basic foodstuffs—and make possible the exchange of food, manufactured goods, and raw materials. To function properly, every road must provide service stations and repair shops at regular intervals, and they in turn require a supply of workers.

Indeed, all prospects for Bolivia's economic and commercial development bring us back to the need for skilled labor. The industrial teachers must convert boys from the subsistence-level groups into artisans, maintenance and repair men, and workers for forge, loom, and lathe.

When the Pedro Domingo Murillo National Industrial School first was established, it limped along for several years without making any real contacts with industry. The schools lacked machinery and equipment. The craftsmen who joined the faculties lacked training in how to teach. Most of the graduates became teachers in the new regional schools then being opened.

In 1948, the Inter-American Cooperative Education Service (called SCIDE from the initials of its name in



*Student learns basic techniques of filing at early stage of specialized program*



*Advanced students handle power tools, are taught to use safety devices such as goggles*

Spanish) agreed to lend a hand. SCIDE had been established to conduct a joint U.S.-Bolivian educational program, but its activities had been restricted to rural schools. The agency now set up a division of industrial education and brought in a U.S. specialist to direct it. The present director is Clair S. Jones, of Michigan, a man with long experience in industrial education.

SCIDE's first move was to secure machinery and equipment. Later it came to the rescue on the construction of a new plant for Pedro Domingo Murillo. The classroom building is now finished and occupied and we can only hope that the old house where the school was started will not cave in until the new shop building is completed.

Meanwhile, SCIDE provided study grants to faculty members of the main school and the regional schools for training in teaching techniques and in administration. In September 1953 five of us left for a year of study at



*School building was dedicated during administration of President Victor Paz Estenssoro (left). Contractor Enrico, Education Minister Diez de Medina, and SCIDE Director Hart watch Bishop officiate the David Rankin, Jr., School of Mechanical Trades in St. Louis.*

I might point out that industrial schools in the United States are a kind of antechamber from which workers pass into industry. What the schools offer in the way of training is determined by the kinds of industry in the vicinity, and managers and personnel directors depend on the schools to produce the trained people they need. The industrial school, therefore, plays a definite role in the economic life of the country. During my year at David Rankin I had to study the administration of the school, both at the shop level and in the central office and the placement services, for it would be my job to put our schools into the industrial circuit. Up to that time, we had been operating on our own private circuit and were serving industry only incidentally.

The other four faculty members in our group specialized respectively in auto mechanics, home and industrial



refrigeration, tool and die work, and welding, along with teaching methods for these specialties. The next year, other faculty members of Pedro Domingo Murillo went to the same school to study plumbing, machine shop, and radio, and the year after that our draftsman studied offset printing; at present two other teachers are at the University of Michigan. Teachers from the sectional schools have been sent for training to the trade school established in Peru under the U.S. technical assistance program.

The experiment in shop management that we started in one of the machine shops at Pedro Domingo Murillo in March 1955 is an example of the kind of changes we are making. The experiment sounds simple enough in the telling, but to understand the skepticism we met with, you have to realize that industrial education has followed the traditional pattern set long ago in this country's schools, with the teacher the only responsible member of the classroom. But the main precept in modern industrial education is that the student must be held responsible for the job assigned him and for the good conduct of the shop.

The two shifts of senior boys working in the machine shop were told that they were expected to shoulder the same responsibilities as any workman in industry. Since some of the tools were constantly disappearing, we started a check-out system like that in industry. We made a tool crib from a closet, sawing the door in two; with the upper half of the door open, the keeper of the crib can check out the tools without allowing anyone in.

As shop foreman, the instructor keeps a record of all work, and each student's card shows the nature of his various jobs, the amount of time he spent on each, and the foreman's evaluation of his performance. He is judged exactly as he would be in industry.

Perhaps the greatest psychological change we called for was in "sweeping up," for our Bolivian youth are not accustomed to wielding a broom, but they took to it with hearty good will. In the opening weeks of this experiment, during the week-long Easter vacation, I stopped by and found every machine in the deserted shop greased and in perfect order, and I knew that our teaching had caught on.

Needless to say, a mature environment in the shops favors ingenuity in the students, and in fact they often surprise us with their resourcefulness. One day Mr. Jones and I were crossing the patio when the forge instructor hailed us and came out with a bench vise that a student had made from an old automobile spring. It was hand-forged and an excellent piece of work. Since we have to import steel into Bolivia, it behooves us to know how to turn old automobile springs into something else.

The new style in shop management was copied throughout the school. The tool crib with its Dutch door appeared in every shop and the check-out system was installed. Safety zones were marked off, safety posters were put up, and the students became more conscious of health and safety on the job.

The enrollment in our industrial-school system has been jumping in the past few years and is now close to



*For the first time, Bolivian students were made responsible for maintenance and care of machines and shop*



*Electrical cables being laid for installation of new machine in Cochabamba workshop*

three thousand students, of whom six hundred are in the main school at La Paz. There are ninety-nine teachers in the sectional schools and thirty-four in Pedro Domingo Murillo. Students receive basic training at the former in carpentry, electricity, plumbing, welding, refrigeration, radio, sheet-metal work, foundry, industrial chemistry, machine shop, and drawing and the graphic arts. Related elective courses complete the five-year curriculum.

Our present students range from fourteen to eighteen years of age, and many of them have not finished elementary school.

The schools are supported from a budget provided by the Ministry of Education, SCIDE, and the manufacturing industries. There is no tuition fee. Pedro Domingo Murillo maintains a dormitory, in which sixty boys from other cities are now living. Another 150 students have government scholarships to cover their expenses while they take their industrial training.

Two hundred and twenty-seven students have graduated thus far from Pedro Domingo Murillo. Nearly 100 per cent are now entering industry. Graduates in chemistry are working in the laboratories of mining companies, textile factories, and water-filtering plants. On such specialists falls the responsibility for guarding the quality of metal output, improving the use of textile dyes, and maintaining safe water for our growing cities. Those of our graduates working as maintenance and repair men in factories are an important group, for it profits us little to import machinery for the expansion of industry if we do not provide the men to keep it in order. Another essential group of workers graduated from Pedro Domingo Murillo are the auto mechanics, who never have trouble finding jobs.

Bolivia needs better communications in order to achieve physical unity, and therefore needs many more electricians. One of our alumni, who came to us as a youngster and spent seven years in Pedro Domingo Murillo, is superintendent of the Cochabamba Electric Company.

A number of graduates have gone on to the university to study engineering or chemistry. At the other end of the scale are those who leave school somewhere along the way; these we have salvaged for industry through our placement service. Pedro Domingo Murillo has been

regarded both within the gates and outside as a school for training skilled technicians, but that impression is entirely too limited. Perhaps half of an entering class will go on to graduate, but the others can be channeled into industry as semi-skilled workers. This school year, for the first time, we have begun aptitude and psychological tests for all entering students.

A small machine shop in La Paz by the name of Metabol, Ltd., with a payroll of some sixty men, affords a good illustration of what the Pedro Domingo Murillo School is doing for industrial development. This shop makes a variety of articles, such as hand-operated blenders (usable in areas where the current is too uncertain for electrical equipment), cheese presses, corn shellers, nutcrackers, and other equipment for use in homes and factories and on farms. The blenders, for example, are the first that have been made in Bolivia, and the only others on sale here have been an occasional imported one at an exorbitant price. They can be used in small canning factories. Eleven graduates of Pedro Domingo Murillo work in this machine shop, and the manager says that he counts upon adding four more every year. The company is thinking of opening a branch in the Santa Cruz area and in that event will call upon the school for more machine operators. Such a step would take the manufacture of these small machines into an agricultural area. The famous New England industrial system grew up by such a process of the branching-out of small factories.

We industrial educators see the economic picture as a series of close-ups of industrial-school graduates at lathe and forge, bending over a test tube, or repairing a crippled truck. Knowing that many more are preparing to follow them, we believe that, at least in respect to trained-manpower requirements, the industrial expansion of Bolivia is assured. ♦ ♦ ♦



*Classroom building of Pedro Domingo Murillo School*

# Sánchez was like that

REMINISCENCES OF A DOMINICAN TOWN

HILTON DANILO MESKUS

illustrated by LEO HERSHFIELD

HILTON DANILO MESKUS, free-lance writer from the Dominican Republic, was an editor on the Ciudad Trujillo daily *La Nación*, worked for the Office of Inter-American Affairs in Washington, D. C., during World War II, and was later editor of the UN Feature Service. LEO HERSHFIELD, formerly art director of *The Democratic Digest*, is a well-known illustrator now living in Alexandria, Virginia.





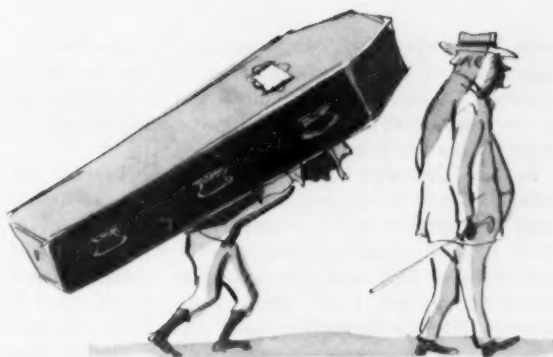
THE TOWN OF SÁNCHEZ, where I grew up in the early twenties, was perhaps the most cosmopolitan settlement in the whole Caribbean. Tucked in the northwestern corner of Samaná Bay, in the Dominican Republic, it had more hills than San Francisco. A telephone directory of the place would have read like the United Nations' *Repertoire Téléphonique*. Even the local social group, which in most Spanish-speaking communities sports the name of some leading patriot or local hero, was properly called the "Club Internacional."

People from the four corners of the globe had settled in Sánchez, leaving the Dominicans or Spanish-speaking residents almost in the minority. At the time it was the main outlet for the cocoa and tobacco hauled from the interior by a British-owned railway, and several European merchants had offices staffed from their own countries. My father held an influential position with the agents of the leading European and U.S. steamship companies; he was also Lloyd's surveyor; and at one time or another, besides being consular agent for Uncle Sam, he would pinch-hit for the Dutch, Danish, and French consular representatives. Despite, or maybe because of, his many and varied activities, he was a Doubting Thomas if I ever saw one. While most of our neighbors took life as they were told or as they had read they should, he always maintained an indefinable air of indifference.

Cyril Vanderpool, one of his cronies, was a building contractor from the Dutch West Indies. A self-made architect, carpenter, and engineer, he changed his mind so often that he didn't live to see the completion of any of his numerous projects. Still standing in mute tribute to his procrastination are a church minus a belfry and his own unfinished house, which over a period of twenty years was redesigned the same number of times. Vanderpool's greatest unaccomplishment was a "Liberty Hall," commissioned as a memorial to the late Marcus Garvey, who had envisioned the establishment of an African empire to which Negroes of the Americas might emigrate. The Hall turned out to be a West Indian Babel where workmen of at least twelve nationalities argued in as many languages over the exact location of doors and windows. Partitions were torn down as soon as they were erected because of Vanderpool's frequent appearances with a new set of blueprints, which no one knew for sure how to read.

Even now, removed fifteen hundred miles and some twenty years from the scene, I can close my eyes and see the *maestro*—as all good carpenters, masons, tailors, and other skilled fauna are called in Spanish America. Standing in shirt sleeves across the street from his unfinished memorial, his eyes glazed in absorbed contemplation, he would explain to any willing listener that the progress was slow because his workers were lazy. It never occurred to him that the delay was mostly due to his own re-designing.

Another village cornerstone, a tried and true friend of both my father and Vanderpool, was Hermann "Pa" Hagen. In his late sixties, Pa Hagen, the antithesis of Vanderpool, took no chances. Life, he would declaim, had proved an unending succession of uncertainties, and



it was good to be prepared. Born in Germany, which for some obscure reason he had to leave in a hurry, he had been implicated in the Haymarket labor riots in Chicago in 1886. Pa Hagen had then settled as far as possible from the civilized world and for a number of years had been sole owner and operator of the town's Hotel Alemán—a cross between a Central European inn and a high-class saloon, with such services as could be expected from Ludwig Bemelmans' operatives under stranger conditions and stronger pressures.

Hagen and his friends were heavy tipplers—heavy even for the time and the environment in which they lived. In spite of his determination to end his days in relative peace and quiet in his tropical paradise, his fortitude in handling the stuff and his tendency to accommodate worthy but needy friends without benefit of cash transaction constituted a financial risk. All this to the despair of his wife, "Ma" Hagen, a woman of such high principles that on her weekly visits to the confessional she could produce no sins of her own and was forced to concentrate on the inadequacies of her husband. Hagen's sinful proclivities were as well known to the local priest as they were to his bosom drinking companions.

Pa was wont to slake his thirst beyond his limit. The resulting two or three days' incapacitation would allow Ma Hagen an opportunity to put the house on a paying basis. No chits were signed, no drunks were tolerated, and the closing time was advanced to ten o'clock. She presided behind the bar and at the cash drawer with an air that mingled grim determination to maintain order and mournful resignation to the hard lot visited upon woman.

The hotel-saloon was tremendously popular with men of the sea because of Hagen's generosity. But with Ma in control of the oasis, a feeling of constraint prevailed.

Pa Hagen considered himself a far-sighted man and was against taking any more unnecessary chances. When sober, he did his best to organize his life so nothing would be left to chance.

He was feeling that way at the time he saw a casket on display in a funeral parlor. It was a beautiful thing to behold, he thought, and instinct told him that if he waited until it became a pressing need, the casket might represent an unreasonable outlay of money. He bargained like an Arab and came home with the casket.

Sateen-lined, padded, and luxuriously decorated with gold-plated handles and name plate, the casket soon be-

came the pride of the Hotel Alemán. It provided Ma Hagen one of the few justifications for her husband's existence. At least his final hours could be accompanied by the substantial dignity befitting a gentleman and the respected head of a family.

But for the next six or seven years, whenever the weight of over-indulgence descended on Pa, he would settle comfortably in his luxurious casket and live another day surrounded by the candles and flowers the hotel habitués kept handy. It became an established procedure for my father and other friends who dropped in to cover Hagen's flushed face and arms with flour and call Ma Hagen to view her "departed" husband. Everyone was always amused to hear Mrs. Hagen say in her broken English just what she thought of Herr Hagen's "health."

And so it went, week after week, with Pa sleeping off an occasional binge in his mahogany casket and Ma somberly carrying on the business of the Hotel Alemán. After a few years, however, Hagen's physical structure began to deteriorate visibly, and his demise was expected every time he retired to his beloved casket.

Then one day an accident shook the peace of the group that gathered at the Hotel. Cyril Vanderpool tripped on a scaffold in the church he was building and came to a sudden end. As often happened in Sánchez, it had been raining for two weeks. Trains had stopped running, and the only movement over the railroad tracks was by way of small motor boats. The rain continued, and a respectable casket could not be brought into town for love or money.

Vanderpool's family, shocked by the sudden departure of their loved one, were also worried over the prospect of burying him in a coffin unworthy of his position in the community. So, true to his lifelong display of generosity, Pa Hagen insisted that his casket be used for the departed friend—for the funeral only. At the cemetery the body was to be surreptitiously transferred to a pine coffin. Cyril Vanderpool was to make his last journey in full splendor, and the casket was to be returned after the funeral.

Through some misunderstanding the transfer was not made (years later I learned that, true to tradition, everyone was in his cups before, during, and after the ceremony), and the pride of Hermann Hagen's household for so many years—his beautiful, comfortable casket—was irretrievably lost.

A few days later Pa Hagen passed away and had to be laid to rest in an ordinary pine box.

The disappearance of two dear friends in less than a week stunned my father. He became moody and less talkative than usual. Gone were his jokes and joviality. After a while I decided to crack the silence barrier and get to my dad's inner thoughts.

"What's the matter, Papa?" I asked him.

"Hagen is dead, and I've been thinking," he said dully, looking at me for the first time since I had entered his bedroom.

"Son," he added solemnly, "I've learned a lesson I want you to remember." And after another pause, laying his hand on my shoulder with affection: "It doesn't pay to plan ahead." ♦ ♦ ♦



# Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo

## Master Critic

FERNANDO ALEGRÍA



"MORE THAN seven hundred Spaniards of various social classes, of diverse and even contrary schools and opinions but united in veneration of their homeland and love of science, have joined together to honor . . . not a sage, not a poet, not a great orator, but simply a scholar, whose works can never be popular and whose only role in the world is as a staunch and constant worker on the intellectual history of Spain."

With these dignified, sober words, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo modestly acknowledged the homage paid him by his compatriots in 1910, when they issued a medal bearing his image. A man now venerated by the whole Spanish-speaking world, he had no illusions about the glitter of decorations and the prestige of academic diplomas. He looked upon his monumental work with that "reflective and serene good humor that seems the supreme irony of one who has seen much of the world and suffered many torments in this life," to use the words he himself applied to Torres Naharro. Though surprised at

the scant attention long paid him by the critics, and perhaps secretly offended because his own verses were never known outside the learned academies, he accepted without reservation the task of polishing and setting the poetic jewels of others, cementing the prestige of his colleagues, organizing collections and classical libraries, unearthing classical monuments. It was the others who won spectacular fame and easy success; the reading public deified them and publishers fought over them.

Yet Menéndez y Pelayo is without doubt the greatest historian of Spanish literature and philosophy who ever lived. According to his own plan for the definitive edition of his *Obras Completas* (1911), his works were to be arranged in nineteen groups, beginning with his *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (History of the Spanish Heretics) and ending with *Estudios sobre el Teatro de Lope de Vega* (Studies on the Theater of Lope de Vega)—all in all, a collection of more than two hundred publications. They ranged in subject matter from exacting bibliographies and translations of Greek, Latin, and Old Hebrew literary texts to a history of Spanish American poetry. Books such as *Orígenes de la Novela* (Origins of

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Menéndez y Pelayo as a young man

the Novel), *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España* (History of Aesthetic Ideas in Spain), *Bibliografía Hispano-Latina Clásica* (Classical Hispano-Latin Bibliography) and *Horacio en España* (Horace in Spain) are monuments of scholarship and creative genius. The bibliography on Menéndez y Pelayo has reached gigantic proportions, especially since the centennial celebration of his birth last year, when every major magazine and newspaper in Spain and Spanish America devoted a commemorative issue to him.

He was born on November 3, 1856, in the city of Santander. The son of a teacher, he grew up among books. He was a melancholy, retiring child, whose mother had to keep a careful eye on him so that he would not sit up all night reading by candlelight. At ten he began his studies for the bachelor's degree. While still a boy, he frequented the gatherings in the bookshop of Fabián Hernández, attended by all the intellectuals of the town. While his elders talked, the boy worked his way around the bookshelves, letting nothing escape him, absorbing everything with a prodigious memory. He was famous for his precocious seriousness and, above all, for his religious zeal. In a Catholic country where the atheists tend to be more fervent believers in God than the pietists, Marcelino believed with his heart and his intelligence; he lived his religion—or, rather, religion, accepted serenely and without mystical raptures, was his life. He did battle many times for his faith and church, but never so touchingly as in this incident recalled by a fellow student of his:

"At a certain point in that philosophy course, the professor used to divide the students into groups of three; each student was given a theme to develop in a prepared speech, and other members of the group had to object to its argument in syllogistic form. Marcelino's day came.

The hall was full. Many of us went who weren't studying philosophy yet. His thesis was the immortality of the soul, and we were all astonished when he began, as if with a text for a sermon, by reciting in Latin a long relevant paragraph from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*. Then he unrolled his manuscript and began to read, and what he had written followed up what he had recited. I should point out that he was then thirteen years old. But the second part of the exercise was yet to come: the objections. . . . The moment came when he could find no exit from the labyrinth of major premises, minor premises, and consequences. '*Ergo conclusus!*' exclaimed his adversary, in the ringing, triumphant voice obligatory under the circumstances. For the moment, nothing more happened. But trustworthy witnesses swear that after class they saw Marcelino, weeping with rage, butting his head against the walls of the patio."

In pursuit of the knowledge that would buttress his faith, he preferred Barcelona to Madrid for his university studies. He later wrote: "Although a man's life is perpetual education, and many other influences have succeeded in variously coloring my spirit, which, if nothing else, has never ceased to be investigative and curious, my essential nature is the one I owe to the old school of Barcelona, and I believe that substantially it has never altered." The significance to Menéndez y Pelayo of the "old school of Barcelona" was not only that it was a refuge against exaggerated rationalism but, what is much more important, that it was one of the first centers of critical research with modern methods in Spain. In those days, literary criticism was predominantly of an eloquent and oratorical sort, often with pseudo-philosophical overtones, sometimes polemical or speculative, when it was not purely impressionistic under the influence of the already outmoded Romantic school. In Barcelona, where he studied with Milá y Fontanals, Menéndez y Pelayo learned the scientific discipline on which he later built his own system of criticism, combining all the branches of traditional criticism in a single harmonious whole: historical, the study of literary sources and the circumstances in which a work of art is produced; philosophical or transcendental; objective, such as that practiced by bibliographers, paleographers, and linguists; and subjective, or strictly aesthetic.

For his doctorate he went to Madrid. He received his degree at nineteen with a dissertation on the novel among the Romans, particularly the *Satyricon* of Petronius and the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius. About the same time—that is, before he was twenty—he amazed his friends with a series of projects for truly monumental works: the outlines of *La Ciencia Española* (Spanish Science, the first edition of which appeared in 1876), *Horacio en España* (first published in 1877), *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (published in three volumes between 1880 and 1882), and *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España* (published in five volumes between 1883 and 1891). In short, Menéndez y Pelayo devoted much of the rest of his life to writing the works he conceived during his adolescence.

This may be the secret of his productivity: the mag-

nificent single revelation of what his entire work was to be, accompanied by the method, patience, and will to carry it out during thirty years of intense activity, without departing by a hair's breadth from the path marked out in advance. These works are not patched together haphazardly; each is a perfect structure planned with assured critical judgment and amazing historical erudition. Anyone even cursorily familiar with their content can realize the magnitude of his intellectual conception. An examination of, for example, the outline of *Historia de las Ideas Estéticas* reproduced by Bonilla y San Martín in his introduction to the fourth volume of *Orígenes de la Novela* reveals Menéndez y Pelayo's pellucid power of synthesis—a power that enables him to sketch in two or three pages a history of aesthetics not only in Spain but in the whole Western world.

His fellow citizens of Santander, recognizing the genius of the young humanist, provided him with generous subsidies that made it possible for him to devote himself exclusively to his intellectual labors and to travel to the cultural centers of Europe. On these journeys, which became legendary, precious manuscripts seemed to spring into his way and disclose to him secrets hidden from other scholars for centuries. His talent for discovery became proverbial among his friends. What he could not buy to take back to Spain he copied patiently. Paris, Florence, Rome yielded up their bibliographic gems, and his private library grew to contain more than forty thousand volumes, among them rarities of incalculable value. He paid off his debt of love and devotion by willing this library to Santander.

On returning from one of his journeys, in 1878, he expressed a desire for the chair of Spanish literature at the University of Madrid, left vacant by the death of J. Amador de los Ríos. Legally ineligible because of his extreme youth, he mustered his friends and pulled strings to have the law modified, or at least an exception made in his case. Both the Congress and the Senate approved a bill lowering the age limit for university professorships, and Menéndez y Pelayo retired to Santander to prepare a program for a course in the history of Spanish literature, in which he included Hispano-Roman, Catalan, and Portuguese literature, and three lessons on the Semitic literatures. Although the jury that was to make the final selection included some of his best friends, he did not escape opposition. It seems curious today that a man of such indisputable merits, who never coveted anything but academic recognition, awakened passions and sus-

picious not only among colleagues—with whom it might have been a question of envy—but among politicians and among cheaply popular journalists and writers. Eventually, the tribunal of professors voted six to one in his favor. Later, when Harzenbusch died and Menéndez y Pelayo openly expressed a desire to replace him in the Royal Academy of the Language, "despite my clumsiness in handling it," he was elected only over the opposition of Castelar. In 1902 he failed of appointment as director of the San Fernando Academy; then he was defeated for the post of director of the Academy of the Language. So few votes did he get on this last occasion and so deeply did he feel the defection of his friends that he could not be consoled till the people of Santander had gone out of their way to demonstrate their own loyalty.

To these childish rebuffs was united a certain indifference of the professional critics toward his books. When the third volume of the *Heterodoxos* appeared, he wrote to a friend: "Can you believe that up to this time no one has written a word about the book, either for or against, or even to say that it has been published? The Krausists, journalists, and other animals have resorted to the



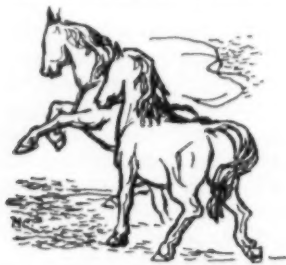
strategy of silence, and so far none of them have broken the pact. My friends are silent also, perhaps because I have spoken or tried to speak the truth to everyone. It doesn't matter." And in a letter to Clarín he said: "Your words, which are always listened to with respect and attention in Spain, have a double value for me because they are almost the only ones written about my books. Even Emilia Pardo Bazán makes a practice of relegating me to the 'Books Received' section."

The truth is, Menéndez y Pelayo's frankness and, often, argumentativeness aroused animosities. He was a man of declared principles—declared out loud. In politics he was always identified with the most obstinate of Spanish conservative forces. In religion he defended his Catholicism with dogmatic aggressiveness. This political and religious ideology so shaped his literary conceptions that his historical research and his understanding of aesthetic trends are centered on it and his interpretations flow from it; in short, he was what is called nowadays a "committed" writer. Thus, his viewpoint on the past of Spain and of Europe was a limited one, oriented toward the lessons that would serve as a foundation for his doctrines of unblemished Catholic traditionalism. His defense of his rightist position, made always without subter-



fuge or apology, incurred for him the enmity of liberal thought in Spain and America—particularly, in the case of America, because of his praise of the Ecuadorian dictator García Moreno in the *Antología de Poetas Hispanoamericanos*. His often unjust attacks on what he called “Krausism”—by which he meant all that his conservative spirit rejected in the fields of philosophy, education, art, and politics—earned him a reputation as a reactionary. But all this, as with the great Spanish American humanist Andrés Bello, affected only the surface of his work. In what was essential and permanent he instinctively sought the values of an authentic classicism based on total comprehension of the aesthetic phenomenon.

That he could offend is beyond doubt. How, for example, could the brotherhood of grammarians and pseudo-critics forgive him when he clapped them into a fossil museum with: “But I shall never reconcile myself to regarding as eminent teachers—worthy of a place alongside the sublime metaphysicians and the lofty poets, the great historians and philologists—the copyists of inscriptions, the accumulators of variants, the authors of catalogues and bibliographies, the grammarians who study the conjugations of this or that barbarous and unliterary dialect, and an infinity of other useful laborers of the kind. They are hard-working, deserving well in the republic of letters, but are not and cannot be anything but laborers, without literature, without philosophy, and without style.” But opposite the resentful rose a phalanx of friends and disciples. They elected him deputy for Majorca in 1884 and for Saragossa in 1891, senator for Oviedo, and, from 1889 till his death, senator for the Spanish Academy. In 1884 his teacher Milá y Fontanals bequeathed him all his archives. Another loyal friend was responsible for his being appointed permanent librarian of the Royal Academy of History in 1892.



An anecdote related by Bonilla y San Martín illustrates very well the reverence and affection he was capable of inspiring:

The master was talking that year of Tirso de Molina. . . . It was a foggy day in January. Our class had begun at three and was supposed to end at half past four. We were dealing that day with the comedy *El Rey Don Pedro en Madrid* (King Peter in Madrid), and the master was discussing how it had been attributed both to Tirso and to Lope de Vega. . . . More than an academic lecture, it seemed to us a procession of flesh-and-blood people, each baring his soul for us and miraculously revealing to us the mysterious hiding places of his thought and life. The master was talking as if possessed by a holy enthusiasm and we were listening with the absorbed and fervent attention a proselyte may devote to the word of an emissary of the Almighty. The darkness stealing over the room, the small number of us, the imposing



*In old age, scholar was venerated by all Spanish-speaking nations*

silence, all contributed to the effectiveness of the master's incisive, vibrant words. . . . But suddenly someone noticed that it was almost time for Manolín, the old beadle, to come in and tell Don Marcelino to bring the class to an end. . . . Without any agreement between us, the same idea entered our minds, and one of us silently left the room to threaten the beadle with stupendous penalties if he interrupted that day. . . . At last the light went entirely and the master, unable to read Tirso's text, recited it from memory and also recited Lope and Zorrilla and many more and interpreted and commented on them, and brought to light the secrets of their work. . . . Six o'clock struck. . . . And we left the classroom, silent and moved.

This is not naïve hero-worship. Bonilla himself tells us that Menéndez y Pelayo was not a naturally gifted orator—he stammered “like Alcibiades and Demosthenes”—and that this very defect, which “seemed only the effort he made to conquer the rebellion of his nerves,” contributed to the success of his lectures by “increasing the dramatic intensity of his thought.”

Menéndez y Pelayo's influence on Spanish America has been profound. The writers of America came to identify him with the ideal of unity based on the common patrimony of Spanish culture. They read his judgments with religious respect and accepted his approbation or censure as the official voice of the Spanish intelligentsia. They wrote urging him to deal with Spanish American literature and deluged him with books, pamphlets, magazines, newspaper clippings, manuscripts, outlines, critical observations on his work; to all he replied with exemplary patience and genuine interest. Some of this vast correspondence has been published, but there must be material for a dozen volumes more.

The most interesting and significant of these letters, I believe, are those Menéndez y Pelayo exchanged with the Colombian humanist Miguel Antonio Caro between 1878 and 1892, for it was in them that the idea was first seriously broached of a history of Spanish literature containing a section on Spanish America. In one of Caro's first letters he lamented the absence, due to lack of data, of any reference to Spanish America, “whose literary history is an integral part of that of Spain,” in *Horacio en España*. With his customary enthusiasm, he then pro-



ceeded to a long list of correspondents in various countries from whom Menéndez y Pelayo could obtain information. Far from being intimidated by these ambitious proposals, Menéndez y Pelayo found them a splendid point of departure.

In a letter written in 1892 he sketched in the following terms his plan for the history: "Despite the vastness of the enterprise, I shall not give the work exorbitant proportions, having learned from the failure of my predecessors, the Mohedanos and Amador de los Ríos. I want to do a book that will be at once concise and complete, a book in which the aesthetic criterion predominates over the historical, of general interest without detriment to its scientific rigor. . . . As you see, this must be the work of many years. . . . For the American part, I of course count on your collaboration. This material must be incorporated without delay into the general body of our literary history." Caro replied joyfully and with pride in having been the originator of the project, named several works Menéndez y Pelayo should consult, and added: "I believe that American literature does not admit of philosophical connections or classifications of native schools; part of it belongs as an overseas offshoot and appendix of Peninsular history, and part comes down to the history of some eminent and original men. . . . It is sufficient for you to center your investigations on the peak names. . . . In short, just as you wrote the history not of heresy in Spain but of the heretics, thus I conceive that here there is no other literary history than that of our writers and poets." After a sensible general recommendation concerning the tone of the work—"a middle course between a French-style dissertation and a farrago of Germanic erudition"—he embarked on a fundamental critique of Menéndez y Pelayo's plan and put certain questions to him that may have cooled his scholarly zeal somewhat.

The history was never written—perhaps because Menéndez y Pelayo had already written it indirectly in his works of criticism. But Caro's recommendations and the literary news sent by numerous American correspondents did originate the famous *Antología de Poetas Hispanoamericanos*, one of the first attempts at a panoramic view, criticism, and history of Western Hemisphere literary production. This was published between 1893 and 1895, though as early as 1881 Menéndez y Pelayo had said in a letter: "Every day a selected and well-ordered collection of American poetry becomes more necessary." The years have passed, and despite the shortcomings and minor errors inevitable in a work based on data provided by collaborators so diverse and distant, it remains the most complete and systematic study of Spanish American poetry up to the second half of the nineteenth century. From it the new generations of Spanish American critics learned Menéndez y Pelayo's historical-aesthetic method. By the end of the nineteenth century they had turned from the essentially linguistic research of the Bellos, Cuervos, Amunáteguis, and Caros to the fields of history, philosophy, ethics, and aesthetics. This evolution is reflected in the work of such humanists as Justo Sierra, Carlos Arturo Torres, Alejandro Korn, and Valentín

Letelier—all of them men of the most firmly liberal politics.

How far Menéndez y Pelayo's influence extended in the deeper level of philosophical and aesthetic conceptions has still to be studied. At the turn of the century our literature was adorned with the exotic gems of Modernism, and though Darío himself, influenced by the traditionalism of Menéndez y Pelayo and Valera, cultivated a purity of language that gives his poetry a rather equivocal dazzle, his disciples forgot their organic connection with the Spanish heritage and lost themselves in the seductions of French symbolism. Nevertheless, Menéndez y Pelayo's thought slowly penetrated deep in Spanish America, and is leaving a permanent mark on our literature. It has flashed forth in the work of the most outstanding contemporary critics, such as Alfonso Reyes, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, and their disciples of the present generation. Reyes has himself acknowledged his debt in referring to "the days when I was beginning, without guide and without teachers (though this is putting it badly, for I had at my side the admirable books of Menéndez y Pelayo)." Professor Manuel Olguín of Chile, one of the most brilliant commentators on both Reyes and Menéndez y Pelayo, mentions "the method Reyes adopted from the time of his first essays in Mexico; a method that makes erudition not an end but a point of departure for psychological, philosophical, and aesthetic interpretation—the supreme goal of criticism, according to Menéndez y Pelayo, the master of his adolescence."

Despite the Roman Catholic basis of his theories, they have universal validity. No one has defined better than Menéndez y Pelayo himself the profoundly spiritual essence of his traditionalist doctrines. "Today," he wrote just before his death in 1912, "we are witnessing the slow suicide of a people that, deceived a thousand times by sophistical prattling, impoverished, shrunken, and desolate, employs its few remaining powers in destroying itself. Chasing after the vain tricks of a false and artificial culture instead of cultivating its own spirit—which is the only one that ennobles and redeems races and peoples—it liquidates its past, jeers at the shades of its progenitors, flees from all contact with their thought, blasphemes everything in history that made it great, tosses to the four winds its artistic riches, and looks on stupidly at the destruction of the only Spain known to the world, the only one whose memory has sufficient virtue to postpone our death throes. . . . Where the heritage of the past—poor or rich, great or small—is not piously conserved, let us not hope for an original thought or a dominating idea. A new people can improvise everything except intellectual culture. An old people cannot renounce its own without extinguishing the noblest part of its life and falling into a second childhood very close to senile imbecility." ♦ ♦ ♦



# a word with a Guatemalan psychologist



Dr. Jaime Barrios Peña

PSYCHIATRY and applied psychology may be new in Guatemala, but an ambitious young psychologist is busy making them known and putting them to use in his native land. Four things take up the time of Dr. Jaime Barrios Peña: the Mental Health Center and the Center for the Observation and Re-education of Minors, both government-sponsored; a private service organization called the Guatemalan League for Mental Health; and his psychology courses in the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City. "More time than I really have," he says, "but there is still so much to do."

"Poverty and weakness of family ties are, I would say, the major causes of mental ill health in Guatemala." So Dr. Barrios attaches special importance to the large outpatient division of the Mental Health Center, of which he is the consulting psychologist.

"I think the group that suffers most from the pressures of society is the *ladinos* [those who follow the non-Indian pattern of customs]. At least, to judge from the greater incidence of neurosis among them. It's interesting that while the Indians tend to suffer more than the *ladinos* from epilepsy, they are freer from neurosis—and also from alcoholism—until they are transplanted or try to assimilate into urban life. Then they face new pressures and demands that they have built up no defenses against. Another problem is that the standards taught in the schools never reach the homes of a great part of our population. On the other hand," Dr. Barrios added, "even the wealthier people rarely go to a psychiatrist."

In the United States on a three-month tour under the State Department's Educational Exchange Program, Dr. Barrios explained he had come to observe U.S. public schools and study community methods of dealing with juvenile delinquency. He also plans to visit psychiatric centers—and hopes, incidentally, to improve his English before attending the Fourth Inter-American Congress of Psychology at the University of Puerto Rico.

"A good example of the progress made by psychology in Guatemala is the changed attitude of officials doing child-rehabilitation work. My book on delinquency and re-education, *Transgresión y Reeducción*, tells how I reorganized the Observation and Re-education Center and

how we have successfully treated cases considered hopeless under the old, jail-like, reform-school system." With an air of the classroom about him, Dr. Barrios explained in some detail that he reduces the problem to one of attitudes. He recognizes that anti-social attitudes stem from deficiencies in the child's family relationships, combined with economic want, personal traits, and shortcomings in the educational, religious, and recreational institutions of the community. "The staff of the Center makes a continuing diagnosis of each child's emotional needs, and this guides us in reconstructing his attitudes."

"Of course, we need services in Guatemala that cover a wider area than the Observation Center. The first thing I did when I returned in 1951 from the University of Mexico, where I took my degree and did advanced work in applied psychology, was to organize a graphic exhibition showing an individual's psychological development under the influence of a frustrating environment on the one hand and of a favorable environment on the other." Its success in creating awareness of mental-health problems led him to found the semi-professional Guatemalan League for Mental Health. One of its early ventures was to publish a pamphlet, *¿Qué Es la Salud Mental?* (What Is Mental Health?), for distribution to educators, nurses, and administrators. The League has a criminology division, directed by Dr. Barrios, which has undertaken a prison-reform program. Other services include a counseling department, a workers' mental-hygiene department, and a department of personnel training.

Teaching and research at San Carlos keep Dr. Barrios working overtime. "I don't know what I'd do without my wife's help," he adds. She is a social worker and psychologist, has written on juvenile delinquency, and edits the magazine *Espigas* (Stems).

"I teach courses on social psychology, clinical psychology, the psychology of personality, and the schools of modern psychology," Dr. Barrios explained. "I'm also director of research and field work in the department. One of our jobs is to convert standard psychological tests into Guatemalan terms." In his questionnaires and fact-gathering he is helped by a group of fifteen student investigators. So far they have put together some three thousand files on men and women between twelve and twenty. "This is only a sampling, but we've tried to make it as representative as possible. On the basis of an initial questionnaire we select subjects for further testing in our search for facts from all strata of Guatemalan life."

The author of a work on the psychopathology of uncertainty and of a study on "the concept of individuation in personality anomalies," this dedicated social scientist has also trained several younger psychologists and many social workers.

"At this stage," Dr. Barrios concluded, "I've only one complaint—the tendency in our young countries to consider the scientist omniscient. They think of him as a finished product rather than a specialist in need of constant renewal, through professional contacts and study. His science itself is likely to be still in the making. Strictly speaking, he cannot work alone, for science is a cooperative enterprise."—V. T.

# O A S

## FOTO FLASHES



**During session** of the Committee of Presidential Representatives, Dr. Milton Eisenhower (left) announced a voluntary contribution of the U.S. Government to the Pan American Sanitary Bureau for its intensive anti-malaria campaign. Dr. Fred L. Soper (right), director of the Sanitary Bureau, receives the million-and-a-half-dollar check from OAS Secretary General José A. Mora. The population of Hemisphere malarious zones totals eighty million.

**Teresa Montes de Oca** is a rising young Dominican soprano who studied under Alberto Sciarretti in New York, where she made her concert debut in 1949. She has sung operatic roles with the New York Opera Guild and the New Jersey State Opera Company, and has appeared with the National Symphony Orchestra of the Dominican Republic. At her PAU concert she performed works by Mozart, Debussy, and Gounod.



**Pan American Week** activities included a series of talks by PAU staff members on countries of the Americas to U.S. schools, clubs, and colleges. Here, Julio C. Silva of the Press Section (who wrote "The Desolate Land" in last month's AMERICAS) answers questions of members of the Mount Vernon Junior College Spanish Club.

**A group** of Brazilian labor leaders, now touring the United States under International Cooperation Administration sponsorship, exchange views with OAS Council Chairman Fernando Lobo of Brazil (left). An important part of their program was observation of PAU activities in the field of social, economic, and educational planning and cooperation.







## A COMING OF AGE

IN AN ARTICLE in *Cuadernos*, Spanish-language bimonthly magazine published in Paris by the Congress for Freedom of Culture, the noted Chilean author and critic Arturo Torres-Rioseco stresses the fact that "all problems between the two Americas date from the times of conquest and colonization" and that to improve relations "Spanish America should be studied and understood in terms of 'what it is' and not 'what it should be'":

"... The sixteenth-century Spaniard exalted his destiny as a ruler and his personal merits. . . . The grandiose was an everyday matter for him, whether in adventure, art, divinity, love, or death. Immersed in Catholicism, he found symbolic meanings everywhere in life.

"The Englishman—Protestant and pragmatic—developed commerce, industry, technology, and science . . . , while the Spaniard worked at moral relations among men. . . . Religion and art were not as vital to the Englishman as to the Spaniard. Life was matter-of-fact.

"... Ever since then, the English have considered the Spanish fanatical, impractical, impulsive, and lazy; and the Spanish look on England as a mercenary nation without faith or ideals. . . .

"... In Spanish America, humanism has become a sterile intellectualism, a sort of educational baroque. . . . In the United States, education is utilitarian and meaningful . . . ; intellectualism is limited to a small minority. The final product of Spanish American education

is the outstanding man; in the United States it is the average man. . . .

"With the industrial growth of the United States . . . , indifference toward Spanish America changed into materialistic interest; Spanish American indifference toward the United States gave way to fear and hatred. . . .

"However, at the beginning of the First World War the United States . . . needed an alliance of American nations, a New World democratic bloc . . . , and for the first time there was talk of cultural relations. . . . Then during the period of the 'Good Neighbor Policy' the United States really mobilized its intellectual forces. Professors were sent to Spanish America as cultural attachés; universities created professorships dealing with Spanish America . . . ; translations of famous books were published . . . ; and museums exhibited collections of Spanish American art. The Pan American Union . . . became the hub of cultural propaganda, and the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Guggenheim foundations introduced the human element through an exchange of teachers, students, and artists. . . .

"Yet despite this apparently gigantic undertaking . . . , only a very few intellectuals, financiers, and politicians have shown sustained interest in Spanish America. . . .

"Incidentally, one serious error is to speak—as I have done here for reasons of expediency—of Spanish America as a single entity. Culturally, the various countries have not kept pace with each other. Some have reached 1957; others have not progressed beyond the nineteenth century; and a few are still in

the colonial era. . . . To send technical, cultural, or economic missions to Spanish America or to invite representative delegations from there, each nation must be studied carefully and individually. . . . Collective judgments and decisions are worthless. . . .

"Pan American Union officials are outstanding Hemisphere intellectuals; the Library of Congress has one of the world's finest collections of books in Spanish; and the best U.S. universities have special Latin American study centers. All that is needed now is general recognition of the importance of these efforts . . . and a broader range of activities, for Pan Americanism has come of age. . . ."

## DOWN ON THE FARM

ENRIQUE MARTÍN FAYRE says there are things about rural Paraguayans that most of their city brothers have not yet learned. His article appeared in *Paraguay Industrial y Comercial*, published by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce in Asunción:

"That the educated people in the capital cannot fathom the psychology of the country people is incredible, since many of them are sons of farmers or were once farmers themselves. Because our country people do not react violently and noisily against injustice and mistreatment, some city dwellers say the way to handle them is with swift kicks. Others think they are easily deceived and can be kept in line by trickery. Actually, both suppositions are false. . . . The country people are sensitive and proud . . . and use passive resistance as their defense. They simply gather their belongings and leave Paraguay, or perhaps move into town. . . . As a result, the rural areas are being depopulated.

"The Paraguayan farmer has no professional training; that is, he does not know the technical side of agriculture. He has no money. Even if he had, he would not invest it in the land . . . , because he does not know how to make money work for him. . . . Of course, there are exceptions, but they only prove the rule.

"Despite the praiseworthy efforts of several progressive government administrations, agricultural training has fallen far short of the desired goal. The teachers must do more than grad-

uate from agricultural schools . . . , where the most intelligent man acquires little more than theoretical knowledge from books. Only when an agronomist has to earn a living from the land . . . does he become a real farmer. Otherwise, he probably cannot even grow beans.

"Our farm people are simple but not stupid, and they quickly recognize . . . superficial, fragmentary knowledge. Therefore, the results of agricultural training programs have not warranted the government funds spent on them. As a matter of fact, the attempts at agrarian reform have not reformed anything yet. . . ."

### MUSEUMS OR MAUSOLEUMS?

In the São Paulo daily *O Estado de São Paulo*, Rosa Maria Frontini (author of "São Paulo Landmarks" in *AMERICAS*, April 1957) outlines her impressions of U.S. museums:

"In 1910 there were some six hundred museums in the United States. Today there are an estimated three thousand. Of this total, which includes historic houses and university and private museums, more than seven hun-

dred are supported by public funds. One third are devoted to art, another third to natural history, a tenth to science, the rest to industry. . . .

"During the first three decades of this century U.S. museums were research and study centers for the intelligentsia. . . . Then came the idea of 'the museum for the majority.' Around 1930 museums began to affiliate with universities. During the Depression, the government took a hand in the common man's welfare, and the museums in his education. Still, education in itself was not enough to attract crowds. So all sorts of activities were organized to awaken public interest. Although there are in the United States many museums especially for children, most of the others also have educational programs—with films, records, radio, television, planetariums, and the like—designed to fill gaps in young lives. . . .

"As for presentation and display, the museums have long since ceased to be conglomerations of golden arches and heterogeneous rarities. . . . Works of art have been carefully mounted and lighted . . . , and to keep visitors



Cooperative housing.—Unión, Mexico City

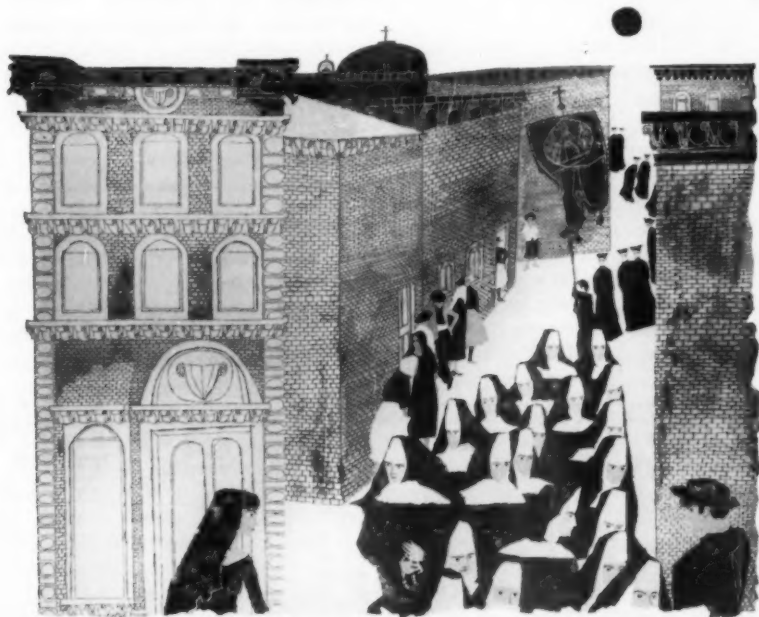
from becoming footsore, cork, plastic, or wooden floors have been installed. . . .

"I observed a trend toward small institutions, with the large museums . . . circulating exhibits and lending works of art . . . , a cultural boon to smaller cities and towns.

"Many museums prepare exhibits on science, art, or history that are both eye-catching and instructive. An interesting example is at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, where the visitor can operate all the machines, bringing the displays to life. . . .

"Every effort has been made to improve the ways of explaining and interpreting exhibits. The legends for works of art have been modernized, and guides' lectures, publications, and dioramas reoriented. Even electronic devices are used. Several museums have television programs. . . . Some are busy with courses for children and adults; question-and-answer sessions; music, dance, and movie programs; home loans of works of art to individuals . . . ; special parties and dances for members; and religious services. Some have reading rooms, restaurants, and other public facilities.

"In short, the 'museum-mausoleum' has gone forever. These modern museums . . . have directly affected many phases of U.S. life, but we do not yet know the depth of that influence, the changes it will bring about in human behavior, and to what extent it will refine artistic tastes. Aware of all this, museum directors . . . are constantly on the lookout for new and better ways to attract and encourage . . . the 'common man,' who is their primary interest in this period of popularization. . . ."



Phil Hays' illustration for short story by late Peruvian genre writer Ricardo Palma in special "We Go to South America" issue of Seventeen, U.S. fashion magazine for teen-agers. In recognition of "good neighbor" issue, OAS Secretary General José A. Mora held reception at Pan American Union for Mrs. Enid A. Haupt, publisher and editor, and presented her with citation for furthering inter-American unity

## A SOLDIER'S LOVE

THE SIDELIGHTS of a hero's life, though not as widely known, are often as interesting as his courageous exploits. Writing in *Simón Bolívar*, a new Colombian monthly that is the official organ of the Bolivarian Center of Itagüí in Antioquia Province, Cornelio Hispano describes a romantic episode in the life of the Liberator:

"In 1812, there lived in Salamina, a small port on the Magdalena River . . . a family of French immigrants . . . one Monsieur Lenoit, his wife, and their seventeen-year-old daughter Anne.

"When the French adventurer Labatut began the campaign that year on the lower Magdalena, Colonel Simón Bolívar was second in command. In Salamina, he heard talk about a 'little lady' in town who spoke several languages, so one afternoon he visited her. Anne was alone with the servants, since her parents had gone shopping in Santa Marta. Bolívar listened raptly as she told him why they had had to leave France and come to America. . . . As for Anne, she marveled at the twenty-eight-year-old gallant whose military bearing and alert mind foretold his future as a ruler of peoples and founder of nations.

" . . . The following afternoon they talked about France, and about the talent and grace of French women. . . . The third day Bolívar was late in arriving, and Anne petulantly demanded to know why. . . . He apologized and then talked of love and . . . of his dreams of glory. Anne was ecstatic. . . .

"Bolívar did not go to see her the next day. However, when Anne became ill on the fifth day after their meeting, he rushed to her bedside. . . .

"Later, when the liberating squadron dropped anchor in the Piñón

River, Bolívar saw Anne, waiting with arms outstretched. . . .

"You see, Anne," Bolívar explained, 'I'm a soldier of the revolution, fighting for liberty. Here today, there tomorrow. It's my fate to keep on the move, without stopping a moment to rest. So what can I offer you?'

"Anne began to cry, and Bolívar kissed her forehead. Within an hour the fleet had sailed. . . .

"At Heredia the Spanish had set fire to the town, so the ships proceeded under cover of night. The following day, after Bolívar attacked and took Tenerife. . . . he found Anne waiting for him in the house where he was to stay.

"Can you tell me, mademoiselle," he asked, 'the reason for this unexpected visit?'

"It's very simple. I have decided not to be separated from you again, come what may," the stubborn young lady replied.

"But don't you know that your reputation is apt to be ruined if you follow an army?'

"What does that matter if I find peace of mind?'

"But what do you intend to do in the midst of such danger?'

"Die with you."

"Bolívar fell silent. . . . After dinner, he took her to the door and—after many embraces, sighs, tears, and ardent kisses—promised he would come back and marry her. So Anne agreed to return to her parents' home.

"As Bolívar continued his glorious campaign . . . , word of his triumphs reached Anne. . . . She never doubted that he would keep his word. *If Bolívar doesn't marry me*, she would say to herself, *he won't marry anyone*. . . .

"Years later, in 1830, a large ship . . . made a sad voyage down the Mag-

dalena River, where Bolívar had begun his heroic career. Now he was returning, sick in body and soul, to seek an isolated beach on the Atlantic where he could rest and die. At Punta Gorda an officer went ashore to ask around town for Anne Lenoit, but no one knew her. At Barranca Nueva, the ailing Bolívar disembarked and headed for Cartagena.

"The news of the Liberator's trip quickly spread to the village of Tenerife, where Anne then lived. . . . When she found out about the inquiries the officer had made in Punta Gorda, . . . she was overjoyed: 'Bolívar has come to keep his promise!'

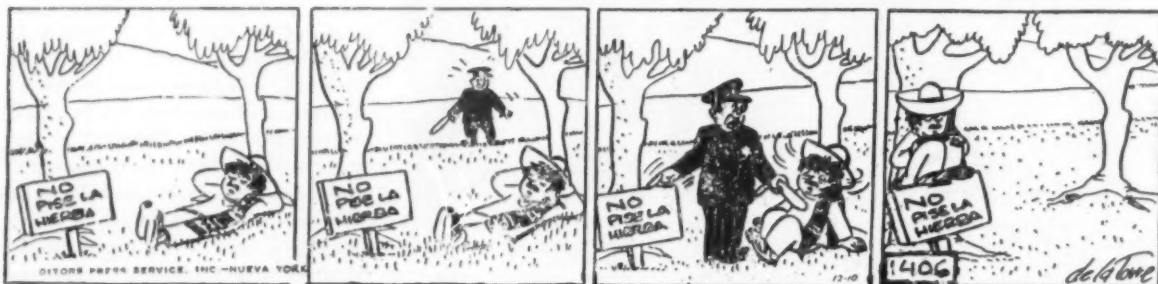
"She immediately set out to meet him; but when she arrived in Cartagena, the Liberator had gone on to Santa Marta. After waiting several days for a ship, she finally decided to take the land route, arriving in Santa Marta—after a delay due to illness—on December 18.

"Bolívar had died the previous afternoon at one o'clock.

" . . . After the funeral, Anne returned to her village and lived there in comparative seclusion until her death in 1868. However, on special anniversaries she would read aloud to her friends Bolívar's proclamations, speeches, and letters. . . . Today, in the cemetery at Tenerife, the name Anne Lenoit is still legible on a stone half hidden by brambles and eroded by time."

### Answers to Quiz on page 43

1. As a poetess. 2. O Aleijadinho ('the little cripple'). 3. In the sixteenth century. 4. Over England. 5. The usual pattern. 6. El Dorado. 7. A caravel. 8. Inherited from his half brother Lawrence. 9. A stopping place for outdoor religious processions. 10. True.



Keep off the grass.—La Prensa, Managua





## BOOKS

### RECENT ARGENTINE LITERATURE

Reviewed by Bernardo Verbitsky

INTRODUCCIÓN A FERNÁNDEZ MORENO, by César Fernández Moreno. Buenos Aires, Emecé Editores, 1956. 276 p. Illus.

In this book, César, the eldest son of the poet Baldomero Fernández Moreno (1886-1950), offers us a long, lively contact with his father, an outstanding figure in our literature. A poet himself, whose career began auspiciously with the book *Gallo Ciego* (Blind Rooster), César has undertaken a job that presents certain natural difficulties. Undoubtedly he had to overcome inhibition, as his rather aggressive dedication of the book suggests: "To my daughters, to tell them that either one understands one's father or one understands nothing." It might just as well be maintained that, by reason of their very relationship, there is no one less qualified to understand a father than his son. At any rate, César attacked the problem with determination, and he did well, even though we might more logically have expected from him a volume of family reminiscences than an evaluation that leads him into open debate with critics who have analyzed his father's work.

This "introduction" defines three periods in Fernández Moreno's life and work: the *sencillista* (striving for simplicity), 1910-1923; the formal, 1923-1937; and the substantial, 1937-1950, the year of his death. César adds, "Alongside the chronological division, we must make one on the basis of subject matter."

Inevitably, the book interweaves Baldomero's life and work, reflecting in greater detail a parallelism that is everywhere evident in his poetry. The poet himself said in the preface to his 1941 anthology of his own work that going over all his poems was like reliving his life. "A real torture," he called it, "for I have never invented anything. . . . My poetry has faithfully followed my steps on earth: the bit of homeland I was given to live in, city, town, or countryside, love, my nationality, my labors and vacations. There is an impressive unity that certainly was not intentional, for I was only concerned with the natural exhalation of my being."

The book studies the poet's personality, the trends and schools connected with him, and his place in the order of generations of poets. It stresses the new, formerly forbidden topics to which Fernández Moreno gave poetic dignity.

It brings out all that the appearance of Fernández Moreno's *Iniciales del Misal* (Initials of the Missal) meant in 1915. After saluting Rubén Darío in his language of stars and roses, as Jorge Luis Borges has pointed out, Fernández Moreno did something really revolutionary—"he looked at what was around him." Martínez Estrada found two novelties in his work: he placed himself in the middle of his poetry, alive and complete, and he turned the forms that belonged exclusively to prose, and even the prosaic intimacy of the letter, into truly lyrical verse.

In the most important part of this "introduction" the author declares, "Fernández Moreno's *sencillismo* has a special significance in the history of Spanish American poetry, for it consummated one of the biggest modernist revolutions of the time." Among us, it preceded *ultraísmo* by some five years, and perhaps prepared the way for it. There were other anti-Darío manifestations before *sencillismo*, but, at least at the time they appeared, they had a much more strictly personal character. We may mention those of Leopoldo Lugones and Enrique Banchs. Individually they were very important, and at this distance their absolute value is more apparent than that of their influence, but at the time only Fernández Moreno, in González Carbalho's words, "altered the existing poetic order." In carefully distinguishing the shadings of these two rebellions against Darío—*sencillismo* and *ultraísmo*—César Fernández Moreno has made a useful contribution to the establishment of order in our literature. He has dealt with recent poets and literary movements in essays, and shows an aptitude for elucidation in doing a job that few of our critics have attempted.

The book sometimes bogs down in redundant details that make it needlessly long. It seems unnecessary to lean on the observations of Salvador de Madariaga on Spain to show the Spanish root of certain things in Fernández Moreno. It is superfluous to demonstrate, at length and with various quotations, that Fernández Moreno, despite being a poet "with two nostalgias" because of his memory of Spain, did not ignore his Argentine life. And it seems useless and puerile to remark that "in Fernández Moreno you find a series of poems that express a real love for the humble classes."

Nor does it seem necessary to attempt to justify the quality of "poet of everyday life" that is so often attributed to Fernández Moreno. César even cites Karl Jaspers to round out his evidence. Some of his remarks become meaningless commonplaces. Fernández Moreno is not the poet of everyday things, but we must add that he was able to see everything that everyday things involved—life itself in its terrible complexity. There are people who never discover what is around them or in themselves.

In Fernández Moreno we see the spontaneous union of a man and his environment, even in his anxiety to overcome it. It is a sort of communication that is not due to any previous or reasoned position but rather is the reaction of an ever-alert sensibility, the functioning of his spirit and his heart, which sought out and established contact with everything that surrounded him, trapping and immobilizing the passing moment. And that is the natural aim of art. Reading this book along with Fernández Moreno's *Antología* provides a strong sensation that his poetry is the interminable novel of himself, with a Pirandellian touch, as it were. It's not that he reflects his life in his poems, but rather that he re-creates it, or lives it in this other facet. Probably the real-life incident carries the poem within. It is a manner of watching oneself live in a process of revelation that is characteristic of every true writer. Hence his sense of humor, which is certainly something more important than the "veil of irony" this book talks about.

Fernández Moreno called himself the poet "of seventy balconies and no flower." Of course, he mastered many forms of expression, and did not affect any one style. His *Soneto a Tus Visceras* (Sonnet to Your Viscera) or that imaginative *Muerte de la Ciudad* (Death of the City) suffice to show the complexity of his not-so-simple everyday matters. He was a poet without limitations, and therefore difficult to pigeonhole, as this book points out. An individualist in tune with his surroundings, he went beyond them in his poetry and exerted a lasting beneficial influence on us. If we had had something similar in the novel, our young novelists would not be turning somersaults between Faulkner and Erskine Caldwell. Through Fernández Moreno's work, even though it has something of Baroja and a great deal of Azorín about it, we perceive a sharp personal and Argentine vision of our country and its people.



LA GENERACIÓN ARGENTINA DEL 37, by Delfina Varela Domínguez de Ghioldi. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Populares Argentinas, 1956. 220 p.

This book about the Argentine generation that has taken its name from the year of its most decisive action, 1837, won a contest. It is an intelligent presentation of the country's history, emphasizing certain basic lines that are still evident in our day. Reading Mrs. Ghioldi's book, we realize that when the young men who had been born in the years of the 1810 May Revolution reached intellectual maturity, they asked themselves what had become of its spirit. The immediate past as they remembered it was full of bloody struggles that very definitely were postponing the application of its principles. As for the present in which they were living, it was clear that Rosas had made the country regress to colonial forms, the ways of the viceroyalty. As this book well demonstrates, Rosas was the antithesis of the May Revolution. The Revolution did not overthrow the colonial regime, and those who benefited from that regime aided Rosas, who was its incarnation, and who had taken full advantage of all the internal struggles to reaffirm his power and fortify the interests he represented.

In the face of this panorama of regression, the generation of 1837 raised the banner of May. For its leading men, the May movement represented a plan for living, not just political independence from Spain. For them, Spanish domination was a system that was contrary to freedom, and they saw that, though now independent, the country remained tied to the old system.

The job was begun by Esteban Echeverría, whose extraordinary personality is now better understood. Echeverría not only formulated a new policy but also proposed a simultaneous mental and cultural liberation, and he was the first to initiate, in prose and verse, a really Argentine literature. An ideologist, he was also an artist, as revealed in his poem "La Cautiva [The Captive Woman]" and most of all in "El Matadero [The Slaughterhouse]," a notable narrative that, more than a century after its appearance, is not an archaeological specimen but a living page of our literature.

The generation of 37 went on gradually organizing and harmonizing the work it had set for itself. Mrs. Ghioldi accurately points out the landmarks: Alberdi's *Fragmento Preliminar* and *Bases*, Echeverría's *El Dogma Socialista*, Sarmiento's *Facundo* and *Educación Popular*. These landmarks are books, but they are not just intellectual creations without roots in the life of the country. On the contrary, they are the first serious attempts to achieve a national policy based on reality, a policy based on ideals, not on class interests, a policy that should be the result of an honest evaluation of what the country was.

Therefore, the generation of 37 was neither unitarian nor federalist. (Echeverría defined both of those groups very well.) It pointed out to the Argentines that they were killing each other, that the creed of May could unite them regardless of their differences. To overcome antagonisms, harmonizing the best that each of the

clashing groups had to offer, was the aim of these disinterested patriots. Visionaries though they were, they provided practical bases for the organization of the nation. Everything that came after the battle of Caseros—that is, after the fall of the Rosas tyranny—down to the beginning of this century, was a projection of their desires. And undoubtedly many of those aspirations still belong in a program for our time. The ideals of the generation of 1837 are still fresh, and that is what makes books like this one, lucid in interpretation and clear in exposition, so useful.



CABALLOS, by Luis Gudiño Kramer. Santa Fé, Ediciones El Litoral, 1956. 146 p.

Luis Gudiño Kramer, already well known for his short stories, gives additional proof in *Caballos* (Horses) of his mastery of this genre, in which you must hit the mark, for a near-miss amounts to failure. To discuss each of the stories in this volume would take too much space, but it would be the only way to do it justice. The stories complement each other and add up to a whole, but each one seems to contain the entire book, and indeed the whole countryside. Our fields come to life completely in Gudiño Kramer's stories, with their geographical and social landscape, their beauty and their misery, the people who live in them. The horse is one more workman and that is how he appears here, united in a most unusual fraternal companionship with the men.

In several of these stories, the author tells of the suffering of these intelligent and sensitive quadrupeds, and he convinces us that the animal he describes thinks just so—whether on a morning gallop watching the road that flies by under his feet, or in intimate contact with the men who tame him and harshly train him for his future tasks. But Gudiño Kramer manages to make us forget that he is talking about horses when he narrates their life, so interwoven with that of the rural men and women, so impregnated with human qualities, so close to that life that is rough and poor, spirited and a little barbarous, but that is above all a life of work, often well done and always poorly paid. Thus *Caballos* seems a prolongation of the author's *Aquerenciada Soledad* (Beloved Solitude), one of the most important works of prose fiction in the last fifteen years, which set the tone of his work and gave him his standing.

In his stories, Gudiño Kramer oscillates effortlessly between the tragic and the comic, which are probably the two fundamental tones of life. The Argentine country man has a sense of humor, and he uses it to conquer his own destiny, showing that man is stronger than his environment. There is a sometimes visible, sometimes hidden current of humor in José Hernández, in Hudson, in Benito Lynch, and in this author, who, whether be-

cause of an affinity or an influence, carries on this splendid Argentine tradition.

All this is contained in his characteristic language. No one else makes the country people speak the way Gudiño Kramer does, but it's not just that. Few of our writers reflect or sum up what could be called *criollo* speech, which Hernández captured, and probably Hudson too, transposing it in some degree into English. As Carlos Alberto Leumann said of Hernández, Gudiño Kramer does not imitate or merely collect rural expressions. He creates, within the rich rhythm of popular speech. From the formal point of view, some repetitions and examples of voluntary carelessness in his prose might be pointed out. There have been critics who have complained about negligence in his style. All that is really a consequence of his great spontaneity, and only an insensible reader could ignore the expressive force he achieves, in its full maturity and authentic beauty, in this book. It would take an Argentine Amado Alonso to point out all the jeweled but sober verbal riches of stories like "El Potro Zaino [The Chestnut Colt]" or "Una Historia," the dramatic biography of a mare that seems to sum up the fate of a country woman. These stories, with their easy colloquialism, nevertheless have the natural elegance of the purest Spanish and their descriptive accuracy is often as effective as that of an engraving.

Undoubtedly, in these times when writers are searching for authentic Argentine expression, the work of Gudiño Kramer is an example and serves as a guide in more than one sense. *Caballos*, a book that would have delighted Tschiffely and R. B. Cunninghame-Graham, far from presenting a superficial localism, reveals once more that the authentic always holds latent within itself the possibility of universality.



EXAMEN DE NUESTRA CAUSA, by Alberto Girri. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sur, 1956.

The poem that gives this book its title has at its head this phrase from Charles Péguy: "I understand very well, God said, that one must make his own examination of his conscience." The poems of Alberto Girri are many facets of a single effort. Alert to everything around him, attentive to everything that wells up within himself, he is the protagonist of a continual monologue that is dense, compressed, and full of genuine anguish, even though that word probably never appears in the book. He looks for paths and even asks the doves for them, contemplating their iridescent and beautiful mystery with the eyes of a poet and a thoughtful mind.



Girri executes this examination of his cause on various planes—individual, social, and national. He faces up to sorrow and understands it as a route toward something, toward God. He converses with solitude; the poet also converses with the one who, within him, habitually converses with himself. The book is full of interrogatives, since the writer tackles many problems, first of all the one of himself in all his complexity.

Echoes of Heraclitus in "*El Puente* [The Bridge]," a glance at death, an examination of love from the woman's side—Girri unleashes his inquisitive imagination and sees a great deal. In his poetry more than in that of others, one notices that metaphysical curiosity is not just a cold play of the mind but an essential part of man's nature.

Alberto Girri makes use of unrhymed verse, with ease and only the rhythm that comes from its opaque but firm fluency. His isolation is relative, and in any case his obscurity merits the effort it takes to penetrate it, which doesn't happen with those hermetics who put a lock on an empty chest. His way of expressing himself, bare, hard, bony, has a dry vigor. And Girri keeps the reader in his dramatic world, where feeling and thinking and perceiving intuitively are simultaneous aspects of the fact of living in poetry.



*ESTUDIOS DE LITERATURA CASTELLANA*, by Arturo Marasso. Buenos Aires, Editorial Kapelusz, 1956. 350 p.

The colorless pedagogical title of this book (*Studies of Spanish Literature*) covers an uncommon splendor of criticism and exegesis. In a compact volume with small type, there are studies of Boscán, Fray Luis de León, San Juan de la Cruz, Góngora and *gongorismo*, the *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Lope de Vega, Alexandrine verse, and Hesiod and Pindar in Spanish literature. It may be needless to extol Arturo Marasso's mastery to specialists in his field, but the average reader—and there are more of us in that group—should be told about these profound works. For Marasso, writing about Boscán or Lope de Vega means reconstructing their whole mental universe, with complete details of their cultural upbringing, the influences they felt, their readings. He knows not only the works they wrote but even the books they may have read, for he is versed in the whole literary movement of each era, including the classical works then translated, which produced new echoes in Spanish literature, and he knows the whole literary panorama of the nations linked to Spain—Italy, France, and Portugal—and of course the Latin and Greek literatures from which they are descended. So much real knowledge is infrequent, even among the technicians. To submerge oneself in this

world of poetry, in the literature of all time, study is not enough, nor is the accumulation of information what counts. Marasso leads us through an animated intellectual and lyrical thicket, taking the paths his erudition and his sensibility light up for him.

Marasso's search for the author of the *Lazarillo de Tormes*, for example, is more interesting than a detective story. A literary sleuth, he is subtly guided by indications that take on meaning only for his well-backed wisdom. Many other cases of virtuosity could be cited, but what they all add up to is something else. It is not a question of a parade of erudition but of something much more important, not only because these are personal researches, not knowledge learned, but also because one realizes that Marasso's motives, basically, are love and justice. Both undoubtedly urged him on in his investigation of the possible author of the *Lazarillo*, or when he followed Fray Luis de León through the development of all his work. His studies of Spanish literature sum up the efforts of decades, old vigils that have produced so much schematic knowledge that is both useful for teaching and beautifully written. We admire and also take pride in Marasso's wisdom. We are proud that an Argentine writer has opened to us closed roads of Spanish literature, which really belongs to us.

The noted novelist Bernardo Verbitsky is AMERICAS' literary correspondent in Argentina.

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Inside  
back cover Schoenfeld Collection

#### ERRATUM

In the article "Women in Free Argentina" in last month's AMERICAS, two picture captions were inadvertently switched. The photograph on page 32 is of the committee chairmen of *Por la Patria*; the group picture on page 33 is of the directors of the Women's Civic Culture Center. AMERICAS regrets the error.

# Know Your Neighbors' Colonial Backgrounds?

Answers on page 38



1. This picture of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is based on a copy of the lost self-portrait of the celebrated seventeenth-century nun. Is she famous as a mystic, as a poetess, or for having renounced a huge fortune?

2. This sculpture of the prophet Isaiah was carved by famous invalid sculptor Antônio Francisco Lisboa out of native stone for sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Matosinhos in Minas Gerais, Brazil. Under what name is the artist better known?



3. The Palacio de Minería, where mining engineering was first taught in 1797, is part of National University of Mexico, one of the two oldest in Hemisphere. Would you say the University was founded in the sixteenth, seventeenth, or eighteenth century?

4. This engraving pictures the liberation of Buenos Aires in 1806 by Santiago de Liniers, who was made viceroy for his victory. Was it a triumph over Spain or over England?

5. Lower half of anonymous oil of Our Lady of Caracas shows gridiron plan with central square flanked by Cathedral and government buildings. Was this unique in Caracas or the usual pattern for Spanish colonial cities?

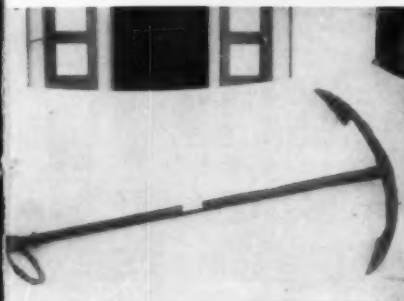
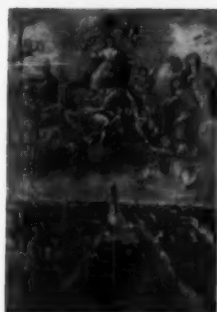
6. At National Museum of Bogotá are coat of mail and spur of Jiménez de Quesada, and sword and dagger of Nicholas Federmann. What was the name of the legendary, gold-paved city sought by these conquistadors?

7. The anchor of Columbus' flagship *Santa María* can be seen in the National Museum of Haiti. A small, slow ship, was it a caravel, a frigate, or a galleon?

8. Mount Vernon, where George Washington is buried, is in Virginia, some fifteen miles from Washington, D.C. Was Mount Vernon inherited by Washington or given to him by a grateful nation?

9. This open *posa* at churchyard corner of monastery in San Miguel Huejotzingo, Puebla, Mexico, dates from 1550. Was the *posa* a stopping place for outdoor religious processions or a safe point from which Spanish missionaries could preach to the Indians?

10. House of the Corregidor still stands in Potosí, Bolivia. The main duty of this civil representative of the Crown, who in practice combined the functions of judge, inspector of Spanish landholdings, and financial administrator, was to preside at meetings of town council. True or false?



## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS AGAINST BLINDNESS

Dear Sirs:

The article "Battle Against Blindness," by Betty Reef, was well done and with good taste.

Nicholas G. Pistolas, M.D.  
Children's Hospital  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sirs:

The absorbing article in the March issue of AMERICAS, "Battle Against Blindness," coincides almost exactly with the announcement of the international poster competition "Mexico Battles for the Blind." The contest is sponsored by Mexico's Department of Health, the Celaya Eye Clinic, and the Instituto Allende. The deadline is July 15, and we would appreciate mention of the competition in AMERICAS. The special award that we are granting to North Americans and Canadians, a full month in San Miguel de Allende with all expenses paid, including transportation from St. Louis, Missouri, is in itself attractive. For residents of Mexico, whether of Mexican or other nationality, there are three handsome cash prizes.

Stirling Dickinson  
Director, Instituto Allende  
San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato  
Mexico

## ART AND ARTISTS

Dear Sirs:

The story "Folk Art for Sale" [January English], with its pretty terra-cotta vessels and toys, has made me look with both pleasure and respect at these genuine products of popular artistry in the little towns around Medellín. Speaking of art, the Colombian textile company Coltejer has just awarded a thirty-five-hundred-dollar prize to the twenty-five-year-old artist Jorge Tobón Lara for a mural painting designed for a chapel being built in one of Coltejer's workers' housing areas. As he has never attended art school and has never exhibited, he represents a discovery in Colombian art circles. Coltejer is offering three other prizes to artists in connection with its Golden Anniversary.

Lucía Molina  
Public Relations Department  
Coltejer  
Medellín, Colombia

## LOYAL OPPOSITION

Dear Sirs:

I want you to know that I like and continue to subscribe to AMERICAS although its short stories are insignificant, empty, diluted, and superficial. I speak only as a reader. But I would like to be told just what some of your stories are supposed to be saying. If the purpose is to bring authors and their work to light, AMERICAS already has a book section. As your loyal subscriber I pretend that AMERICAS does not carry short stories.

José M. Debanne  
Córdoba, Argentina

*We appreciate reader Debanne's loyalty, but take no less pride in our fiction writers than in our other contributors. We hope to come up with a short story he will like one of these days.*

## READERS' CHOICE

Dear Sirs:

Your Mail Bag section is rendering a valuable service to students and international-minded people in this Hemisphere. As a student, I appreciate OAS efforts to foster personal contact and cultural interchange on all levels. Thank you, too, for Ismael

Escobar's significant "Window on the Cosmos" in the November 1956 issue of AMERICAS.

O. Monroy G.  
Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Dear Sirs:

I have just read with pleasure your very interesting article "Apostle of the Birds," by Guillermo Cano. As a bird lover I have profited by being introduced to Father Olivares' work.

Rev. R. Tanguay  
Director of the Museum  
Collège de Sainte-Anne de la Pocatière  
Province of Quebec, Canada

Dear Sirs:

I found Mrs. Dorothy Hayes de Huneeus' article in your January issue a fascinating criticism of Chilean literature. In fact, it piqued my interest so much that I plan to buy a copy of the book *Antología de Medio Siglo*, which she mentions.

Mrs. Philip T. Post  
Baltimore, Md.

## MAIL BAG

The following correspondents, in search of pen pals throughout the Hemisphere, have asked AMERICAS to publish their names and addresses. Readers requesting this service must print their names and addresses and be able to write in at least two of the official OAS languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French), shown below by the initials after the name. Those who are students are asked to say whether they are of high-school (H) or college (C) level. Stamp collectors are indicated by an asterisk after the name.

Luis Stoloas Meiter (E, S, P)—C San Martín No. 780 Buenos Aires, Argentina	Rodolfo Encinas S. (E, S, P, F)* Casilla 532 Oruro, Bolivia
Lina Melcher (E, S, P, F) Lagunas 19 Havana, Cuba	Martha Larraide (E, S, F) Madero 571 Liniers, F.C.D.F.S., Argentina
Gabriel M. Costes (E, F)* 1308 Powell Street San Francisco 11, California	Marcelo Barlerán (E, S, F)—C Anchorena 1342 Buenos Aires, Argentina
Juan Carlos Arroasi (E, S)—C Avenida Pte. R. Saenz Peña 974, piso 7 Buenos Aires, Argentina	Ramón Galli (S, P)* Calle 121 No. 1824 La Plata, Argentina
Jorge Oscar Pantó (E, S)—H Guido 1231 San Antonio de Padua, F.C.N.G.S. Argentina	Francisco Mena Chaves (E, S, P, F, Italian)* Grecia, Costa Rica
Louisa Kennedy (E, S) 222 East Avenue 39 Los Angeles 31, California	Hernesto Sandris (E, S, F) Angeles 19 Valencia, Spain
Vicente Flores G. (E, S)—C* Apartado Postal 244 Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico	Néstor Disenfeld (E, S, P, F)—C* Córdoba 535 Tucumán, Argentina
Graciela Isaurralde Segura (E, S, F) Urquiza 1077 Nogoyá, Entre Ríos Province Argentina	Gladys Pérez Conti (E, S)* Bahía Blanca, Argentina
Linda Winkler (E, S)—H 5634 Benito Avenue Ontario, California	Godofredo Fernández E. (E, S, P)—C Santa Rosa 1410 Córdoba, Argentina
Iracema Ribeiro de Goes (E, S, P)—C Rua General Osório 502 João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil	Henry Schwallier (E, S)* Box 121 Hays, Kansas
	Norma Mirta Dematteis (E, S, F)—C San Luis 3151, Dto. C Mar del Plata, Argentina

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The OAS had its inception in 1890 during the First International Conference of American States, which met in Washington. Today, it operates through a large number of different agencies and institutions throughout the Hemisphere, all contributing to the common objective of preserving the peace and security of the member states and promoting, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development.

The Pan American Union, central permanent organ and General Secretariat of the OAS, has its headquarters in Washington, D. C. Called "The House of the Americas," its main building of white marble, with its tropical patio and Aztec Garden, is visited each year by thousands of Americans from all parts of the Western Hemisphere.

Pan American Day is celebrated annually throughout the Americas on April 14th.





# Highlights of Latin American Art



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